LENIN

On Parliamentarism and Parliamentary Struggle



Collected Related Writings

Erdogan A

ON PARLIAMENTARISM AND PARLIAMENTRY STRUGGLE

SELECTED WRITINGS
from
LENIN

Selected writings from Lenin & Stalin researched and compiled for various articles on the subject. E. A

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Introduction

> "The dialectics of history were such that the theoretical victory of Marxism compelled its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists. Liberalism, rotten within, tried to revive itself in the form of socialist opportunism. " (1)

Fundamental Marxist Leninist Approach on the choice of forms of struggle

Contrary to the arguments of Left deviations, Marxist Leninists never refuse a form of struggle, including and especially Parliamentary form of struggle. Argument as such is against the dialectics of Marxism. Lenin asks, " **What are the fundamental demands** which every Marxist should make of an examination of the **question of forms of struggle**?" and gives his answer;

> "**Marxism differs from all primitive** forms of socialism by not binding the movement to **any one particular form of struggle**. It recognizes the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not "concoct" them, but only generalizes, organizes, **gives conscious expression** to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. **Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas** and **to all doctrinaire recipes,** Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the mass struggle in progress, which, as the movement develops, as the class-consciousness of the masses grows, as economic and political crises become acute, continually **gives rise to new and more varied methods of defense and attack**.. Marxism, therefore, positively **does not reject**

any form of struggle. Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle possible and in existence at the given moment only, recognizing as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, inevitably arise as the given social situation, changes."

" Marxism demands **an absolutely historical examination** of the question of the forms of struggle. To treat this question apart from the **concrete historical situation** betrays a failure to understand the **rudiments of dialectical materialism.** At different stages of economic evolution, depending on differences in political, national-cultural, living and other conditions, **different forms of struggle come to the fore** and **become the principal forms of struggle;** and in connection with this, the secondary, auxiliary forms of struggle undergo change in their turn. To attempt **to answer yes or no to the question** whether any particular means of struggle should be used, **without making a detailed examination of the concrete situation** of the given movement a**t the given stage of its development,** means completely to **abandon the Marxist position....** These are the two principal theoretical propositions by which we must be guided. " (2)

Based on Lenin's assessment of the subject and Marxist - Leninist basic approach, far-left sloganized phrases such as " Marxist Leninists do not use parliament because it is pigsty of bourgeoise" , "no to parliament and election" - isolated from the concrete situation have nothing to do with Marxism-

Leninism, but anti-Marxist-Leninist indeed. Both, theoretically and practically, it is unavoidable and expected for so many variations of Trotskyists to make such arguments for every condition.

During the years of Imperialist war, end of 1916, Lenin in his letter to Inessa Armand was saying;

> "How stupid that Levi is attacking parliamentarism!! Stupid!! And a "Left", too!! God, how much muddle there is in people's heads." "(3)

Undoubtedly these words of Lenin were not for "every condition" but he was emphasizing the stupidity of attacking to parliamentarism on the basis of concrete assessment of that given concrete conditions.

Marxist Leninists do not reject the use of parliament, but they proceed from the historically proven fact that the usage of parliament is entirely contingent on the conditions of any given period and the balance of powers -between revolution and counter revolution. We should not confuse the times when the revolutionary struggle of the masses rising or has already risen, where the large masses do not have parliamentary illusions, where non-parliamentary struggle is widespread and strong, with the times when the revolutionary struggle weak, and where the parliamentary illusions and hopes of the masses are high. The approach and attitude at each given condition will be different. Meaning that the Marxist-Leninists do not approach to question as a " systematized-sloganized" recipe that is appropriate to every condition.

When Lenin was comparing the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic in his speech, he was explaining the

importance of Parliament in the context of the development and struggle of working -class in general;

> " The democratic republic and **universal suffrage were an immense progressive advance as compared with feudalism;** they have enabled the proletariat to achieve its present unity and solidarity, to form those firm and disciplined ranks which are waging a systematic struggle against capital.
>
> The bourgeois republic, **parliament, universal suffrage—all represent great progress** from the standpoint of the world development of society. Mankind moved towards capitalism, and it was capitalism alone which, thanks to urban culture, **enabled the oppressed proletarian class to become conscious of itself** and to create the world working-class movement, the millions of workers organised all over the world in parties—the socialist parties which are consciously leading the struggle of the masses. **Without parliamentarism, without an electoral system,** this development of the working class **would have been impossible.** That is why all these things have acquired such great importance in the eyes of the broad masses of people. That is why a radical change seems to be so difficult. " *(4)*

Above, Lenin is making his assessment on the basis of comparing feudalism, autocracy, etc. with bourgeois Democratic Republic. Widely extracted quote from the same speech below is the comparison of the Soviet system with the bourgeois parliamentary system.

> "Whatever guise a republic may assume, however democratic it may be, **if it is a bourgeois republic,** if it retains private ownership of the land and factories, and if private capital keeps the whole of society in wage-slavery, that is, if the republic does not carry out what is proclaimed in the Programme of our Party and in the Soviet Constitution, **then this state is a machine for the suppression of some people by others.** And we shall place this machine in the hands of the class that is to overthrow the power of capital. . "(4)

The dialectical connection between the two is that the necessity of the destruction of parliament -which is one of the paths of the real revolution- without rejecting it, benefiting from its contribution. Failing in the grasp of Marxist dialectics will result in seeing these two aforementioned assessments as " contradiction ". The **reformist embraces the first,** rejects the second, " **far-left" embraces the second,** rejects the first. However, for this general rejection they bring out neither theoretical nor concrete historical practical illustration.

In regard to those **reformists**' perspective who memorized the first quote above and fitted themselves to it as Lenin says;

> " The opportunists of contemporary Social-Democracy, who have substituted Scheidemann for Marx, have **memorized the rule** that parliamentarism "should be utilized" **(which is absolutely correct),** but have forgotten what Marx taught concerning **proletarian democracy as distinguished from bourgeois parliamentarism**." (5)

In regard to far-left perspective, criticizing Bordiga at the International's second congress, Lenin says;

" Comrade Bordiga seems to have wanted to defend the Italian Marxists' point of view here, yet he has failed to reply to any of the arguments advanced by **other Marxists in favour of parliamentary action.**

> Comrade Bordiga has admitted that **historical experience is not created artificially.** He has just told us that the struggle must be carried into another sphere. **Is he not aware that every revolutionary crisis has been attended by a parliamentary crisis?** True, he has said that the struggle must be carried into another sphere, into the Soviets. Bordiga, however, has himself admitted that **Soviets cannot be created artificially**. The example of Russia shows that Soviets can be organised either during a revolution or on the eve of a revolution. Even in the Kerensky period, the Soviets (which were Menshevik Soviets) were organised in such a way that they could not possibly constitute a proletarian government. **Parliament is a product of historical development, and we cannot eliminate it until we are strong enough to disperse the bourgeois parliament.** It is only as a member of the bourgeois parliament that one can, in the given historical conditions, wage a struggle against bourgeois society and parliamentarianism. The **same weapon as the bourgeoisie employs in the struggle must also be used by the proletariat,** of course, with **entirely different aims**. You cannot assert that that is not the case, and if you want to challenge it, you will have thereby to **erase**

the experience of all revolutionary developments in the world. "

This was to be seen in the case of Russia too. **We were obliged to convene the Constituent Assembly even after the victory of the proletariat,** so as to prove to the backward proletarians that they had nothing to gain from that Assembly. To bring home the difference between the two, **we had to concretely contrapose the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly and to show the Soviets as the only solution**. " *(6)*

If we take what Lenin has emphasized in his critic into account , it wouldn't be wrong to assume that there are two basic reasons why Marxist Leninists use parliament as a means ; **first,** to educate the masses through parliament by exposing the practices of all bourgeoisie parties, to show the working masses that the parliament cannot solve the problems, that in terms of solutions the parliament of the bourgeoisie is a lie and deception , **second** and most importantly, as Lenin stressed above, **that parliamentary crisis** is one of the most important element of the objective and subjective conditions of the revolution and that's why interrelated, directly **dialectically connected with the revolution .**

"Social-Democrats *(Bolsheviks)* **regard parliamentarism** (participation in representative assemblies) **as one of the means of enlightening and educating the proletariat and organising it in an independent class party**; as one of the methods of the political struggle for the emancipation of the workers. This Marxist standpoint radically distinguishes Social-Democracy from bourgeois democracy, on the one

> hand, and from anarchism on the other...the participation of the Social-Democrats in the Duma campaign is of a quite different nature from that of other parties. Unlike them, we do not regard this campaign as an end in itself or even as being of cardinal importance. Unlike them, we subordinate this campaign to the interests of the class struggle." (7)

Marxist Leninists combine both extra-parliamentary (illegal) and parliamentary (legal) struggle depending on the conditions and balance of power.

" Tactics " says Lenin, "cannot be based on the **bare fact that the oppressors deceive the people**; tactics must be shaped after **analyzing class relations** in their entirety and the development of both extra-parliamentary and parliamentary struggle." "(8)

Another Lenin 's widely clipped quote is; "Bourgeois parliament is pigsty; revolutionaries don't work in pigsty". In relation to this, the same writing of Lenin above states;

> " they were based only on the "catchiness" of the boycott slogan and on the revulsion felt towards the brutal reaction of the June Third "**pigsty".** The objective situation, however, was such that on the one hand the **revolution was in a state of collapse and declining fast.** For the upsurge of the revolution a parliamentary base **(even inside a "pigsty") was of tremendous political importance**, since extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation were almost nonexistent or extremely weak. On the other hand, the most openly reactionary nature of the Third Duma did

> not prevent it from being an organ reflecting real class relations, namely, the Stolypin combination of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. **This new relation of classes was something the country had to get rid of**. (8)

As we can deduce from the quotes above, undoubtedly there is no connection with Marxism Leninism in denying Parliamentary struggle as a general rule. In regard to the trial of Group of Social Democrats in Duma Lenin was saying;

> "the trial has revealed a picture **without precedent in world socialism**—that of revolutionary Social-Democracy **making use of parliamentarianism.** More than any speeches, this example will appeal to the minds and hearts of the proletarian masses; **more convincingly than any arguments,** it will refute the legalist opportunists and anarchist **phrase-mongers.** " (9)

Lenin was stressing;

> " obligatory **appointment of definitely revolutionary workers** who are entirely free from traditions, habits and prejudices of peaceful work, parliamentarism and legalism, and who, even if extremely inexperienced, are (1) capable of fighting reformism and opportunism (2) and are in close touch with the rank and file of the proletariat and with its most revolutionary section. (10)

Contrary to the far-left discourse Marxism-Leninism as a principle defending the use of Parliament proceeds from the principle that the use is totally contingent on the specific conditions of a given situation, and the concrete assessment of it.

In a different situation, for example, Lenin was saying;

> " As Social-Democrats we, of course, **have recognised the obligation in principle of using parliamentarism** as a weapon of the proletarian struggle. **But the point is** whether it is admissible for Social-Democrats to take part, **in present conditions,** in a "parliament" like our Duma. Is it admissible to form a parliamentary group without Social-Democratic members of parliament elected by workers' organisations? **Our opinion is that it is not.**" (11)

It is clear that Lenin was not against parliamentarianism in principle. Contrary he was for the use of parliament in principle, but contingent on the concrete assessment of existing specific conditions. **Every decision for a ML derives from and has in mind the interests of working class and of its struggle.**

The same way that Lenin calls anti-parliamentarianism as "stupidity" in where the revolutionary situation does not exist, **he calls parliamentarianism as "stupidity"** in where the revolutionary situation is ripe, and riots have begun.

> "It has become a commonplace for all opponents of revisionism or opportunism in parliamentary countries. It has become generally accepted as the legitimate and necessary rebuff to "parliamentary cretinism," Millerandism, Bernsteinism, and the Italian reformism of the Turati brand. .... The **concept "opposition,"** which has become the reflection and the expression of a political situation **in which no one seriously speaks of an insurrection,** is senselessly

> applied to a situation in which insurrection has begun and in which all the supporters of the revolution are thinking and talking about leadership in it. The **desire to "stick to" old methods**, i.e., action only "from below," is expressed with pomp and clamour precisely at a time **when the revolution has confronted us with the necessity,** in the event of the insurrection being victorious, of acting from above. " (12)

We can find the different approach at different times, and the reason, as I have stressed earlier for the use of Parliament, in Lenin's following statement;

> "**Prior to the capture of political power by the proletariat it was (obligatory) necessary to make use of bourgeois democracy, parliamentarism in particular,** for the political **education and organisation of the working masses**; now that the proletariat has won political power and a **higher type of democracy is being put into effect** in the Soviet Republic, **any step backward** to bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy would undoubtedly be reactionary service to the interests of the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists." (13)

Lenin, with self-criticism states the different approach at different times:

> " The Bolsheviks, it turned out, had a **wrong attitude to parliamentarism in moments of revolutionary** (and not constitutional) crises...
>
> The Bolshevik participation in this hideous fraud, in this farce, had the same justification as their participation in

the Third Duma ; **even in a "pigsty" we must uphold our line, even from a "pigsty" we must send out material exposing the enemy for the instruction of the people.**

The difference, however, is this, that the Third Duma was convened **when the revolution was obviously ebbing,** while at present there is an obvious upsurge of a new revolution; of the scope and the pace of this upsurge, however, we unfortunately know very little." *(14)*

Vulgar Anarchists, phrase-mongering opposition to parliamentarianism, especially in autocratic, fascist countries like Turkey ", neither conforms with the dialectic of Marxism nor with Leninism in its nature.

"For Marx", Lenin says "however, **revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase,** the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and others have made of it. **Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly** for its inability **to make use even of the "pigsty" of bourgeois parliamentarism,** especially **when the situation was obviously not revolutionary**; but at the same time, he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuinely revolutionary proletarian criticism. "" *(15)*

What always interesting is that in countries like Turkey, the efforts and approaches of left- deviation *(Trotskyite variations)* to dish out anarchism as Leninism is not any different from the history of "left- deviation " approach and the attitude in Russia. When Lenin criticized the Otzovists, he was exposing this clearly:

"**You have memorised fragments of Bolshevik phrases and slogans** but your understanding of them is **precisely nil...**

" The **anarchists have absolutely never been able to understand** this simple thing. Now our otzovists and their removed echoers are **trying to introduce anarchist modes of thought** among Russian Social-Democrats, crying out (like Maximov and Co.) that **Proletary is dominated by the theory of "parliamentarism at any price".**

... To show **how stupid and un-Social-Democratic these out cries** of Maximov and Co. are, we shall once more have to begin with the ABC. Just reflect, unjustly removed ones, what is **the specific difference between the policy and tactics** of the German Social-Democrats and those of the socialist workers' parties in other countries? T**he utilisation of parliamentarism;** the conversion of bourgeois Junker (approximate Russian equivalent: Octobrist-Black-Hundred) **parliamentarism into an instrument for the socialist education and organisation of the mass of the workers.** Does this mean that parliamentarism is the highest form of struggle of the socialist proletariat? **Anarchists the world over think it does mean that.** "" *(16)*

For the participation in parliament, in a different country and for a different situation, comparing, Lenin said;

"**the question of parliamentarism is now a partial, secondary question**. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl

> Liebknecht were, in my opinion, correct **when they defended participation in the elections to the German bourgeois parliament**, to the constituent National Assembly, at the January 1919 Conference of the Spartacists in Berlin, against the majority at the Conference.... **I am personally convinced that to renounce participation in the parliamentary elections is a mistake on the part of the revolutionary workers** of Britain, but better to make that mistake than to delay the formation of a big workers' Communist Party in Britain out of all the trends and elements. " .. (17)

Against the participation, Lenin for a different situation says;

> " **The specific feature of the present state of the Russian revolution** is that objective conditions are pushing into the forefront **a resolute, extra-parliamentary struggle for parliamentarism;** and for that reason, there can be nothing more harmful and dangerous at such a time than **constitutional illusions and playing at parliamentarism.** At such a time the parties of "parliamentary" opposition may be more dangerous and harmful than completely and avowedly reactionary parties: this proposition may sound paradoxical only to those who are totally incapable of thinking dialectically. "" *(18)*

Contrary to the Trotskyists and their tailgaters direct or indirect arguments or implications, it is very clear that Lenin did not have categorical rejecting attitude to parliamentarism. The same way, it is very clear that Lenin's attitude to the use of parliamentarism is not beyond its use as a means, it is not an end by itself. Lenin 's attitude to parliament has always been

for the use of it as a means, and always stressed the necessity of preventing the spread of the parliamentary. Lenin who reads the article Lunacharsky wrote before its published notes;

> " I believe the article should be revised along one of two lines: either the weight of emphasis should be shifted to our new-Iskrists, **who are "playing at parliamentarism",** and you should demonstrate in detail the relative, **temporary importance of parliamentarism,** the futility of "parliamentary illusions" in an era of revolutionary struggle, etc., by explaining the whole thing from the beginning ... We must fight **in a revolutionary way for a parliament, but not in a parliamentary way for a revolution;** we must fight in a **revolutionary way for a strong parliament,** and not in **an impotent "parliament" for a revolution**"" (19)

These contradictory Parliamentarianism attitude in appearance is not comprehended in its dialectical connection, and insidiously used especially by the revisionists in order to confuse. As Lenin noted for Russian case, the attitude should be clarified for the masses to understand it correctly;

> " People in Russia are now badly in need of having the relation between parliamentarism and revolution explained to them from the very beginning. (19)

One of the reason for the revolutionary masses fall in to disappointment in countries like Turkey is that, even if few, some of the so called leftists enter in the pigsty in compliance with the pigsty owners and becomes a promoter of pigsty even up to the degree of throwing dirt to Stalin in the pigsty and

becoming a spokesman for the pigsty . Lenin parliament into revolutionary parliamentary. For this reason, Lenin said;

> " The party s**hould demand of its parliamentary representatives,** ....that they utilize their particularly advantageous political position, **not for idle reformist parliamentary talk,** which naturally only bores the workers and **rouses their suspicion,** but **for propaganda for the socialist revolution** . *(20)*

As we can easily see from the above citations, to oppose parliament and parliamentarism in principle is not Leninist but Trotskyite and anarchist approach. Marxist Leninists view the use of parliament as a necessary means to educate the masses, and both, for the parliamentary crisis being an important part of the objective of conditions of revolution, and its direct connection with the revolution, they would not reject the use of parliament. Contrary, Marxist Leninists, as long as the conditions permit are for the use of Parliament. "how is one to see what is what in the fight between the various parties? Does not this fight, with its fraud and advertising, indicate that representative institutions, parliaments, assemblies of people's representatives, are in general useless and even harmful, as rabid reactionaries, the enemies of parliamentarism make out? " asks Lenin, "No." he responds, " **In the absence of representative institutions** there is much more deception, political lying and fraudulent trickery of all kinds, and the people have much fewer means of exposing the deception and finding out the truth." (Political Parties in Russia, CW V18, P 44)

These words of Lenin below for the required specific " condition " assessment in order to determine the " use or reject of parliament should give a clear idea;

> ""**How can one say that "parliamentarianism is politically obsolete**", when "millions" and "legions" of **proletarians are not only still in favour of parliamentarianism in general,** but are **downright "counter-revolutionary"!? ..**
>
> ....Parliamentarianism is of course **"politically obsolete" to the Communists** in Germany; but—and that is the whole point—**we must not regard what is obsolete to us** as something **obsolete to a class, to the masses.** Here again we find that the "Lefts" do not know how to reason, do not know how to act as the party of a class, as the party of the masses. **You must not sink to the level of the masses**, to the level of the backward strata of the class. That is incontestable. **You must tell them the bitter truth.** You are in duty bound to call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices what they are—prejudices. **But at the same time,** you must soberly follow the actual state of the class-consciousness and **preparedness of the entire class** (not only of its communist vanguard), and **of all the working people** (not only of their advanced elements)." (21)

Taking Advantage of Legal Opportunities During Reaction Period

The petty-bourgeois far-left *(always understand this left opportunists and Trotskyites)* approach to the topics, most

typically has been in the form of "**memorized phrase-mongering**" and sloganization of **theories regardless of the existing conditions**. Generally, their heads buried in the sand defending "illegal struggle " only, they reject all kinds of legal democratic and socialist struggle, and label these struggles as" reformism " in order to prepare the justification and ratification of their escape form the daily struggle.

Lenin characterized the " otzovists " (those who qualify every legitimate struggle as reformism) for defending the tactics of Bolsheviks in where the revolutionary struggle was higher, rejecting the benefit of legal opportunities in the period of reaction, as the " Caricatures of Bolshevism".

> ". To make the task of **"strenuously opposing all deals"** the pivot of our agitation today means making oneself a caricature of Bolshevism. " . (22)

For the so called far-left", current conditions and situation," " balance of powers", "interests of working class and her struggle ", etc. are concepts that has no meaning or importance. For they have become the experts of applying phrase making slogans as templates **fitting their far-left subjectivity and drawing the worst cartoons of Bolshevism drawn.**

In a similar situation of Turkey, where the far-left was against the Parliamentary struggle with the argument that" All reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, must be emphatically rejected..." Lenin responded to the German Communists;

> ""“. . . All reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, must be emphatically rejected. . . .”
>
> This is said **with ridiculous pretentiousness** and is **patently wrong**. “Reversion” to parliamentarianism, forsooth! Perhaps there is already a Soviet republic in Germany? It does not look like it! **How, then, can one speak of “reversion”? Is this not an empty phrase?**" (21)

Lenin brings the following example and explanation of the importance of the use of Parliament, especially in reactionary Periods;

> "" it has been proved that, **far from causing harm to the revolutionary proletariat, participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament,** even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet republic and even after such a victory, **actually helps that proletariat to prove to the backward masses** why such parliaments deserve to be done away with; it facilitates their successful dissolution, and **helps to make bourgeois parliamentarianism “politically obsolete” .**"
>
> ""We **Bolsheviks participated in the most counterrevolutionary parliaments,** and experience has shown that **this participation was not only useful but indispensable** to the party of the revolutionary proletariat, after the first bourgeois revolution in Russia (1905), so as to pave the way for the second bourgeois revolution (February 1917), and then for the socialist revolution (October 1917). . "" (21)

For those who hide behind a far-left mask as an easy way to escape from struggle without being seen as reactionary, Lenin says;

> " **it is very easy to show one's "revolutionary" temper** merely by hurling abuse at **parliamentary opportunism,** or merely by repudiating participation in parliaments; its very ease, however, **cannot turn this into a solution of a difficult, a very difficult, problem.**"
>
> " **Criticism**—the most keen, ruthless and uncompromising criticism—**should be directed, not against parliamentarianism or parliamentary activities**, but **against those leaders** who are unable—and still more against those who are unwilling—**to utilise parliamentary elections and the parliamentary rostrum in a revolutionary and communist manner.**" *(21)*

Lenin while specifying the difference between those with " either - or " approach who draw a bad caricature of Bolshevism states the following;

> " **Our tactics are different.** We make **use of every** reform (insurance, for example) and of every **legal society.** But we **use them to develop the revolutionary consciousness** and the **revolutionary struggle of the masses.** ." (23)

The problem is not only to take advantage of legal opportunities for the interests of the revolutionary struggle, it is the assessment of how to take advantage of the opportunities and to what degree. In this regard Lenin says;

" It amuses us to hear the liquidators say, for example, that we are opposed to “freedom of association”, **for we not only emphasised the importance of this point of our programme** in a special resolution adopted by the January Conference of 1912, but **we made ten times more effective use of the curtailed right of association than the liquidators did.** . " (23)

What decisive is, taking advantage of legal opportunities within a reformists outlook, or revolutionary outlook. Lenin, in reference to make use of it how the Bolsheviks should use the legal of possibilities gives the example of 1903 1905, 1905-1907 and 1917- 1920 periods:

"**1905-07 revolution years.** The alternation of parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle, of the tactics of boycotting parliament and that of participating in parliament, of legal and illegal forms of struggle, and likewise their interrelations and connections—all this was marked by an extraordinary wealth of content. .."

Conference of our Party began to state officially in the name of the Party—that **a bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly would be better than a bourgeois republic without a Constituent Assembly,** but that a “workers’ and peasants’ ” republic**, a Soviet republic, would be better than any bourgeois-democratic, parliamentary republic.** Without such thorough, circumspect and long preparations, **we could not have achieved victory in October 1917,** or have consolidated that victory. "" (24)

Lenin's statement for the years of reaction 1907-1910 is quite valid for the phrase-mongerers who refuses the use of legal opportunities:

> "1907-10 reactionary years, Tsarism was victorious. All the revolutionary and opposition parties were smashed.
>
> ". Of all the defeated opposition and revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat, with the least loss to their "army", with its core best preserved, with the least significant splits (in point of depth and incurability), with the least demoralisation, and in the best condition to resume work on the broadest scale and in the most correct and energetic manner. The Bolsheviks achieved this only because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrase-mongers, those who did not wish to understand that one had to retreat, that one had to know how to retreat, and **that one had absolutely to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary of parliaments, in the most reactionary of trade unions, co-operative and insurance societies and similar organisations.**" (24)

While explaining the later years, " revival " period of 1910-1914, Lenin explains the importance of the use of legal opportunities during the years of reaction:

> "At first progress was incredibly slow, then, following the Lena events of 1912, it became somewhat more rapid. Overcoming unprecedented difficulties, the Bolsheviks thrust back the Mensheviks, whose role as bourgeois agents in the working-class movement was clearly realized by the entire bourgeoisie after 1905, and

> whom the bourgeoisie therefore supported in a thousand ways against the Bolsheviks. But **the Bolsheviks would never have succeeded in doing this had they not followed the correct tactics of combining illegal work with the utilization of "legal opportunities"**, which they made a point of doing. In the elections to the arch-reactionary Duma, the Bolsheviks won the full support of the worker curia. . " (24)

Again, Lenin summarizes the importance of this use during the years of imperialist World War, 1914-1917:

> "**Legal parliamentarianism, with an extremely reactionary "parliament"**, rendered **most useful service to the Bolsheviks,** the party of the revolutionary proletariat. ." (24)

Whether to use the legal possibilities or not depends on the balance of powers of that particular stage. Where the Leadership, organization's and the struggles of the mass of people at its peak, the use of legal opportunities may *(most likely)* not be needed. However, when the specific situation, balance of power is against our favor, as the examples given by the Bolsheviks and particularly during the reactionary period, t**he use of legal opportunities for the interests of socialist revolution is a necessity**. Because at times of reaction where the offensive of capital to the working class and to all strata of people, the purposes of revolutionary organization, the cohesion with the masses, gaining their leadership through practical struggle for empowerment, strength and changing the balance of power are dialectically connected.

During the periods of reaction rejection of the use of legal opportunities, (in most cases) does not strengthen the struggle but serves the interests of reaction through **the practice of far-left in words, pacifism indeed.** Because strengthening of the struggle strictly depends on the movement's **establishment of bonds with the masses** whom facing the attacks of reaction and suffering from it. Struggle cannot develop and cannot be strengthened by abandoning the masses. Especially during the years of reaction in order to bond with the masses to take advantage of all legal opportunities for the interests of the struggle is a must. During the years of reaction, Lenin points out;

> "The present new conditions **require new forms of struggle**. The **use of the Duma tribune is an absolute necessity.** A prolonged effort **to educate and organise the masses of the proletariat** becomes particularly important. The combination of illegal and legal organisation raises special problems before the Party. "(25)

Lenin summarizes the responsibility of the socialists to the masses and struggle;

> "Needless to say, **the task of these cells** and committees must be **to utilize all the semi-legal** and, as far as possible, **legal organisations,** to maintain **"close contact with the masses"**, and to direct the work in such a way that **Social-Democracy responds to all the needs of the masses..** (25)

Is there any way to deduce anything else form Lenin's assessments other than that, especially during the years of

reaction, it is the task of revolutionaries to utilize every legal possibility for the benefit of revolutionary struggle?

In reference to parliamentarianism as one of the forms of struggle Lenin states;

> " Parliamentarism is one form of activity, journalism is another. The content of both can be communist, and **it should be communist if those engaged in both spheres are real Communists**, are real members of a proletarian mass party. Yet, in neither sphere -- nor in any other sphere of activity under capitalism and during the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism -- is it possible to avoid those difficulties which the proletariat must overcome, those special problems which the **proletariat must solve in order to utilize for its own purposes the services** of those who have come from the ranks of the bourgeoisie, in order to gain the victory over bourgeois intellectual prejudices and influences, **in order to weaken the resistance of** (and, ultimately, completely to transform) the petty-bourgeois environment. "
>
> **The childishness of those who "repudiate" participation in parliament** consists precisely in the fact that they think **it possible to "solve " the difficult problem of combating bourgeois-democratic influences** within the working-class movement by such a **"simple," "easy," supposedly revolutionary method**, when in reality they are **only running away from their own shadow**, only closing their eyes to difficulties and only trying to brush them aside **with mere words. .** ""

> .... the attempt to brush aside, t**o fence oneself off from one of the "unpleasant" problems** or difficulties in one sphere of activity is a profound mistake, which will later most certainly have to be paid for. We must study and learn how to master every sphere of **work and activity without exception,** to overcome all difficulties and all bourgeois habits, customs and traditions everywhere. Any other way of presenting the question is just trifling, just childishness. "" (26)

Revolutionaries are " hopeful " and in this sense, in this subject, what they want to realize , and the society they believe in, in that sense is a " dream", but they are not "dreamers" when it comes to the concrete conditions and situations", they are realists who rely on the assessment of the concrete situation. Exampling Turkey, in such a reactionary period, where the revolutionary forces are the weakest in their entire history of struggle to reject the utilization of parliament, is similar to a patient who has the possibility of recovery preferring to remain in vegetative state rather than struggling for recovery.

What is most interesting as well is that , "head in the sand body outside" Ostriche like some "illegal," left-wing parties such as in Turkey , "the illegal communist party " far-left the phrase-mongering is "left in words" and "pacifist indeed" to a degree that falls to the right of reformists.

In the specific tactical practice for the subject of boycotting or participating in the parliamentary elections, the clear outlining finds itself in the words of Stalin;

"" **To accelerate or retard the movement**, facilitate or hinder it—such is the field and the limits within which **political strategy and tactics can be applied.** ""

"" **Tactics are a part of strategy,** subordinated to and serving it. ..Strategy strives to win the war, or to carry through the struggle, against tsarism let us say, to the end; **tactics, on the contrary, strive to win particular engagements and battles,** to conduct particular campaigns successfully, or particular operations, that are more or less appropriate to the concrete situation of the struggle at **each given moment.**

A most important function of tactics **is to determine the ways and means,** the forms and methods of fighting that are **most appropriate to the concrete situation at the given moment** and are most certain to prepare the way for strategic success. Consequently, the operation and results of tactics must be regarded not in isolation, not from the point of view of their immediate effect, but from the point of view of the aims and possibilities of strategy..

tactics must not be subordinated to the transient interests of the moment, they must not be guided by considerations of immediate political effect, still less must they desert firm ground and build castles in the air. **Tactics must be devised in accordance with the aims and possibilities of strategy.**

The **function of tactics is primarily to determine**— in accordance with the requirements of strategy, and taking into account the experience of the

> workers' **revolutionary struggle in all countries**—the forms and methods of fighting **most appropriate to the concrete situation of the struggle at each given moment.** . "" (27)

Especially during the period of reaction where the revolutionary leadership and organization is weak to utilize the legal opportunities in the interests of working people and their struggle is the **integral and inevitable part of revolutionary struggle.** At the time of the reactionary period and the unfavorable conditions and balance of power ,to reject every legal form of struggle and to utilize them for the interests of working class and its struggle can only be the work of the left-wing phrase mongerers who draw the worst caricature of Marxism, Leninism .

In the case of Turkey for example, what is proposed behind far-left phrase mongering? Is the current question to replace one ruling party with another, or democracy (even in its bourgeois meaning) against Autocracy? The utopic baseless approach of" either **all or nothing**" cannot see the difference. In this subject Lenin states;

> " **In politics utopia is a wish that can never come true**—neither now nor afterwards, a wish that is not based on social forces and is not supported **by the growth and development** of political, class forces.
>
> The **less freedom there is in a country,** the scantier the manifestations of open class struggle and the lower the educational level of the masses, **the more easily political utopias usually arise and the longer they persist**. "(28)

Thus, far-left phrase mongers not only pacify the masses but at the same time serve the interests of reaction. Lenin in his speech at the Extra Ordinary 7th Congress of the RCPB says; "we must now write a new Programme of Soviet power and **not in any way reject the use of bourgeois parliamentarism**. It is a utopia to think that we shall not be thrown back." At the same congress in another speech he says; "We ought not in any way to give the impression that we attach absolutely no value to bourgeois parliamentary institutions…. we cannot leave the way open for a purely anarchist denial of bourgeois parliamentarism."

Yes, Parliament is a " pigsty " of the bourgeoisie - especially under autocracy, it has no function at all. But

> ". **the objective situation,** however, was such that **on the one hand the revolution was in a state of collapse** and declining fast. **For the upsurge** of the revolution a parliamentary base (**even inside a "pigsty") was of tremendous political importance**, since extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation were **almost nonexistent or extremely weak.**" (8)

Lenin's forgotten or overlooked following statement is important to comprehend and take note of;

> "**Experience has proved tha**t, on certain very important questions of the proletarian revolution, **all countries will inevitably have to do what Russia has done.** "*(24)*

There cannot be any revolutionary struggle with catchy phrases, slogans that appeal to petty bourgeois subjectivity. This approach harms the revolutionary struggle because it serves the reaction due to the promotion of passivity. This is

precisely the task of Trotskyists stemming from their ideology and their historical servile practice to serve the interests of bourgeoisie.

The argument that there is no difference between an Autocracy and Parliamentary Republic has nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism and its dialectics.

Yes, as Engels points out, " as in a democratic republic, "no less" than in a monarchy, **the state remains a "machine for the oppression** of one class by another" however " **by no means** *(it)* **signifies that the form of oppression makes no difference to the proletariat, as some anarchists "teach"**. "

> "A **wider, freer and more open form of the class struggle** and of class oppression **vastly assists the proletariat in its struggle for the abolition of classes in general...**.For such a republic, without in the least abolishing the rule of capital, and, therefore, the oppression of the masses and the class struggle, **inevitably leads to such an extension,** development, unfolding, and intensification of this struggle that, as soon as it becomes possible to meet the fundamental interests of the oppressed masses, this possibility is realized inevitably and solely through the dictatorship of the proletariat, through the leadership of those masses by the proletariat. **These, too, are "forgotten words" of Marxism** for the whole of the Second International, and the fact that they have been forgotten was demonstrated with particular vividness by the history of the Menshevik Party during the first six months of the Russian revolution of 1917. "" (29)

Especially if we talk about the countries where the democratic revolution has not been carried out and completed;

> "" To the proletarian the **struggle for political liberty and a democratic republic** in a bourgeois society is only **one of the necessary stages in the struggle for the social revolution** which will overthrow the bourgeois system. Strictly differentiating between stages that are essentially different, soberly examining the conditions under which they manifest themselves, does not at all mean indefinitely postponing one's ultimate aim, or slowing down one's progress in advance. On the contrary, **it is for the purpose of accelerating the advance and of achieving the ultimate aim as quickly and securely as possible** that it is necessary to understand the relation of classes in modern society. " (30)

Lenin was emphasizing and summarizing the essence of question in his critique of Bordiga's anti- parliamentarianism;

> " Parliament is a product of historical development, and we cannot eliminate it until we are strong enough to disperse the bourgeois parliament. It is only as a member of the bourgeois parliament that one can, in the given historical conditions, wage a struggle against bourgeois society and parliamentarianism. The same weapon as the bourgeoisie employs in the struggle must also be used by the proletariat, of course, with entirely different aims." (6)

CONCLUSION

The hostility of Trotskyists since 1903 and especially after the revolution against the Bolsheviks and against the revolution - either voluntary or salaried - services to counter revolution is not secret to people who are capable of critical and objective thinking. When Lenin said that whatever Mensheviks of today are, will be of tomorrow, he was not making a statement of prophecy. He was emphasizing the inevitable practical consequence of Trotskyite ideology. With all the variations shaping themselves and fitting the conditions of countries they are in, with their far-left phrase mongering in some, reformist phrasings in others, they keep on serving the counter revolution.

In a country where a functioning parliament does not exist but an autocratic regime reigns, in where almost 100% of population have parliamentary hopes and revolutionary struggle is weak to a degree that almost non-exist , to reject the " parliamentary form of struggle " can only be a Trotskyists counter revolutionary approach in the service of autocracy.

For those who can comprehend, let's leave the words to Lenin;

> "" **There is capitalism and capitalism**. There is Black-Hundred-Octobrist *(autocratic, reactionary)* capitalism and Narodnik (**"realistic, democratic", full of "activity") capitalism**. The more we expose capitalism before the workers for its "greed and cruelty", **the more difficult is it for capitalism of the first order** to persist, the more surely is it **bound to pass into capitalism of the second order**. And **this just suits us, this just suits the proletariat.**

> You think I have fallen into a contradiction? In the beginning of the letter I considered the words "realism, democracy, activity" bad words, and now I find them good? **There is no contradiction here; what is bad for the proletariat is good for the bourgeois...** "" *(31)*

The critique of parliamentarianism approach is not and should not be a critique just directed against the reformists. The reformist approach is easily visible to everyone who has the basic knowledge of Marxism -Leninism. But the most important and most dangerous ones are those cannot be easily seen due to the "Leninist disguise" directed to the petty bourgeois subjectivity and " a way out of struggle" with " far-left ", "catchy " slogans, and phrase making by those Trotskyites and anarchists. Although they never had and do not have any roots in working masses, historical proven fact that they are very effective in creating confusion among the masses.

The question of parliamentarism, parliamentary struggle should always be taken in direct connection with the **existing condition and situation** of that given period , based on **the strength or weakness of revolutionary struggle** - the degree of the parliamentary illusion of the masses- at that moment and **always** the **interests of the working class and their struggle in mind.** As Lenin puts it; **" It is naive to take parliamentarism "in its pure form"**, as an "idea"**, isolated from the real situation"** (32)**.**The approach - without denying some possible exceptions- **will be contradictory** in periods where the revolutionary situation exists and where it does not. Based on the experience of Russian revolution, it is safe to say that the Marxist-Leninist approach follows the logic of" parliamentary struggle - uprising - gaining the majority in

parliament - uprising - proletarian dictatorship (or worker-peasant dictatorship in some cases).

A summary of various articles on the subject during the last ten years.
EA

Early Writings Pre 1903

The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats

Written in exile at the end of 1897

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 2

The second half of the nineties witnessed a remarkable increase in the work being done on the presentation and solution of the problems of the Russian revolution. The appearance of a new revolutionary party, Narodnoye Pravo, the growing influence and successes of the Social Democrats, the evolution within Narodnaya Volya—all this has evoked a lively discussion on questions of programme both in study circles of socialist intellectuals and workers and in illegal literature. Regarding the latter sphere, reference should be made to "An Urgent Question" and the "Manifesto" (1894) of the Narodnoye Pravo Party, to the Leaflet of the Narodnaya Volya Group, to Rabotnik published abroad by the League of Russian Social-Democrats,[7] to the increasing output of revolutionary pamphlets in Russia, mainly for workers, and the agitation conducted by the Social-Democratic League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class in St. Petersburg around the important strikes there in 1896, etc.

At the present time (the end of 1897), the most urgent question, in our opinion, is that of the practicala ctivities of the Social-Democrats. We emphasise the practical side of Social-Democracy, because on the theoretical side the most critical period—the period of stubborn refusal by its opponents to understand it, of strenuous efforts to suppress the new trend the moment it arose, on the one hand, and of stalwart defence of the fundamentals of Social-Democracy, on the other—is now

apparently behind us. Now the main and basic features of the theoretical views of the Social-Democrats have been sufficiently clarified. The same cannot be said about the practical side of Social-Democracy, about its political programme, its methods, its tactics. It is in this sphere, we think, that misapprehension and mutual misunderstanding mostly prevail, preventing a complete rapprochement between Social-Democracy and those revolutionaries who in theory have completely renounced the principles of the Narodnaya Volya and in practice are either led by the very force of circumstances to carry on propaganda and agitation among the workers—nay, more: to conduct their activities among the workers on the basis of the class struggle—or else strive to base their whole programme and revolutionary activities on democratic tasks. If we are not mistaken, the latter description fits the two revolutionary groups which are operating in Russia at the present time, parallel to the Social-Democrats, namely, the Narodnaya Volya and Narodnoye Pravo.

We, therefore, think it particularly opportune to try to explain the practical tasks of the Social-Democrats and to state the grounds on which we consider their programme to be the most rational of the three now existing and the arguments advanced against it to be based very largely on misunderstanding.

The object of the practical activities of the Social-Democrats is, as is well known, to lead the class struggle of the proletariat and to organise that struggle in both its manifestations: socialist (the fight against the capitalist class aimed at destroying the class system and organising socialist society), and democratic (the fight against absolutism aimed at winning political liberty in Russia and democratising the political and social system of

Russia). We said as is well known. And indeed, from the very moment they appeared as a separate social-revolutionary trend, the Russian Social-Democrats have always quite definitely indicated this object of their activities, have always emphasised the dual manifestation and content of the class struggle of the proletariat and have always insisted on the inseparable connection between their socialist and democratic tasks—a connection clearly expressed in the name they have adopted. Nevertheless, to this day you often meet socialists who have the most distorted notions about the Social-Democrats and accuse them of ignoring the political struggle, etc. Let us, therefore, dwell a little on a description of both aspects of the practical activities of Russian Social-Democracy.

Let us begin with socialist activity. One would have thought that the character of Social-Democratic activity in this respect had become quite clear since the Social-Democratic League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class in St. Petersburg began its activities among the St. Petersburg workers. The socialist activities of Russian Social-Democrats consist in spreading by propaganda the teachings of scientific socialism, in spreading among the workers a proper understanding of the present social and economic system, its basis and its development, an understanding of the various classes in Russian society, of their interrelations, of the struggle between these classes, of the role of the working class in this struggle, of its attitude towards the declining and the developing classes, towards the past and the future of capitalism, an understanding of the historical task of international Social-Democracy and of the Russian working class. Inseparably connected with propaganda is agitation among the workers, which naturally comes to the forefront in

the present political conditions of Russia and at the present level of development of the masses of workers. Agitation among the workers means that the Social-Democrats take part in all the spontaneous manifestations of the working-class struggle, in all the conflicts between the workers and the capitalists over the working day, wages, working conditions, etc., etc. Our task is to merge our activities with the practical, everyday questions of working-class life, to help the workers understand these questions, to draw the workers' attention to the most important abuses, to help them formulate their demands to the employers more precisely and practically, to develop among the workers consciousness of their solidarity, consciousness of the common interests and common cause of all the Russian workers as a united working class that is part of the international army of the proletariat. To organise study circles among workers, to establish proper and secret connections between them and the central group of Social-Democrats, to publish and distribute working-class literature, to organise the receipt of correspondence from all centres of the working-class movement, to publish agitational leaflets and manifestos and to distribute them, and to train a body of experienced agitators—such, in broad outline, are the manifestations of the socialist activities of Russian Social-Democracy.

Our work is primarily and mainly directed to the factory, urban workers. Russian Social-Democracy must not dissipate its forces; it must concentrate its activities on the industrial proletariat, who are most susceptible to Social-Democratic ideas, most developed intellectually and politically, and most important by virtue of their numbers and concentration in the country's large political centres. The creation of a durable

revolutionary organisation among the factory, urban workers is therefore the first and most urgent task confronting Social-Democracy, one from which it would be highly unwise to let ourselves be diverted at the present time. But, while recognising the necessity of concentrating our forces on the factory workers and opposing the dissipation of our forces, we do not in the least wish to suggest that the Russian Social-Democrats should ignore other strata of the Russian proletariat and working class. Nothing of the kind. The very conditions of life of the Russian factory workers very often compel them to enter into the closest relations with the handicraftsmen, the industrial proletariat scattered outside the factory in towns and villages, and whose conditions are infinitely worse. The Russian factory worker also comes into direct contact with the rural population (very often the factory worker's family live in the country) and, consequently, he cannot but come into close contact with the rural proletariat, with the many millions of regular farm workers and day labourers, and also with those ruined peasants who, while clinging to their miserable plots of land, have to work off their debts and take on all sorts of "casual jobs," i.e., are also wage-labourers.

The Russian Social-Democrats think it inopportune to send their forces among the handicraftsmen and rural labourers, but they do not in the least intend to ignore them; they will try to enlighten the advanced workers also on questions affecting the lives of the handicraftsmen and rural labourers, so that when these workers come into contact with the more backward strata of the proletariat, they will imbue them with the ideas of the class struggle, socialism and the political tasks of Russian democracy in general and of the Russian proletariat in particular. It is impractical to send agitators among the

handicraftsmen and rural labourers when there is still so much work to be done among the factory, urban workers, but in numerous cases the socialist worker comes willy-nilly into contact with these people and must be able to take advantage of these opportunities and understand the general tasks of Social-Democracy in Russia. Hence, those who accuse the Russian Social-Democrats of being narrow-minded, of trying to ignore the mass of the labouring population for the sake of the factory workers, are profoundly mistaken. On the contrary, agitation among the advanced sections of the proletariat is the surest and the only way to rouse (as the movement expands) the entire Russian proletariat. The dissemination of socialism and of the idea of the class struggle among the urban workers will inevitably cause these ideas to flow in the smaller and more scattered channels. This requires that these ideas take deeper root among the better prepared elements and spread throughout the vanguard of the Russian working-class movement and of the Russian revolution. While concentrating all its forces on activity among the factory workers, Russian Social-Democracy is ready to support those Russian revolutionaries who, in practice, come to base their socialist activities on the class struggle of the proletariat; but it does not in the least conceal the point that no practical alliances with other groups of revolutionaries can, or should, lead to compromises or concessions on matters of theory, programme or banner. Convinced that the doctrine of scientific socialism and the class struggle is the only revolutionary theory that can today serve as the banner of the revolutionary movement, the Russian Social-Democrats will exert every effort to spread this doctrine, to guard it against false interpretation and to combat every attempt to impose vaguer doctrines on the still young

working-class movement in Russia. Theoretical reasoning proves and the practical activities of the Social-Democrats show that all socialists in Russia should become Social-Democrats.

Let us now deal with the democratic tasks and with the democratic work of the Social-Democrats. Let us repeat, once again, that this work is inseparably connected with socialist activity. In conducting propaganda among the workers, the Social-Democrats cannot avoid political problems, and they would regard any attempt to avoid them, or even to push them aside, as a profound mistake and a departure from the basic principles of international Social-Democracy. Simultaneously with the dissemination of scientific socialism, Russian Social-Democrats set themselves the task of propagating democratic ideas among the working class masses; they strive to spread an understanding of absolutism in all its manifestations, of its class content, of the necessity to overthrow it, of the impossibility of waging a successful struggle for the workers' cause without achieving political liberty and the democratisation of Russia's political and social system. In conducting agitation among the workers on their immediate economic demands, the Social-Democrats inseparably link this with agitation on the immediate political needs, the distress and the demands of the working class, agitation against police tyranny, manifested in every strike, in every conflict between workers and capitalists, agitation against the restriction of the rights of the workers as Russian citizens in general and as the class suffering the worst oppression and having the least rights in particular, agitation against every prominent representative and flunkey of absolutism who comes into direct contact with the workers and who clearly reveals to the working class its condition of political slavery. Just as there is no issue affecting the life of the workers

in the economic field that must be left unused for the purpose of economic agitation, so there is no issue in the political field that does not serve as a subject for political agitation. These two kinds of agitation are inseparably connected in the activities of the Social-Democrats as the two sides of the same medal. Both economic and political agitation are equally necessary to develop the class-consciousness of the proletariat; both economic and political agitation are equally necessary for guiding the class struggle of the Russian workers, because every class struggle is a political struggle. By arousing the class-consciousness of the workers, by organising, disciplining and training them for united action and for the fight for the ideals of Social-Democracy, both kinds of agitation will enable the workers to test their strength on immediate issues and immediate needs, to wring partial concessions from their enemy and thus improve their economic conditions, compel the capitalists to reckon with the strength of the organised workers, compel the government to extend the workers' rights, to pay heed to their demands and keep the government in constant fear of the hostility of the masses of workers led by a strong Social-Democratic organisation.

We have pointed to the inseparably close connection between socialist and democratic propaganda and agitation, to the complete parallelism of revolutionary activity in both spheres. Nevertheless, there is a big difference between these two types of activity and struggle. The difference is that in the economic struggle the proletariat stands absolutely alone against both the landed nobility and the bourgeoisie, except, perhaps, for the help it receives (and by no means always) from those elements of the petty bourgeoisie which gravitate towards the proletariat. In the democratic, political struggle, however, the Russian

working class does not stand alone; at its side are all the political opposition elements, strata and classes, since they are hostile to absolutism and are fighting it in one form or another. Here side by side with the proletariat stand the opposition elements of the bourgeoisie, or of the educated classes, or of the petty bourgeoisie, or of the nationalities, religions and sects, etc., etc., persecuted by the autocratic government. The question naturally arises of what the attitude of the working class towards these elements should be. Further, should it not combine with them in the common struggle against the autocracy? After all, all Social-Democrats admit that the political revolution in Russia must precede the socialist revolution; should they not, therefore, combine with all the elements in the political opposition to fight the autocracy, setting socialism aside for the time being? Is not this essential in order to strengthen the fight against the autocracy?

Let us examine these two questions.

The attitude of the working class, as a fighter against the autocracy, towards all the other social classes and groups in the political opposition is very precisely determined by the basic principles of Social-Democracy expounded in the famous Communist Manifesto. The Social-Democrats support the progressive social classes against the reactionary classes, the bourgeoisie against the representatives of privileged landowning estate and the bureaucracy, the big bourgeoisie against the reactionary strivings of the petty bourgeoisie. This support does not presuppose, nor does it call for, any compromise with non-Social-Democratic programmes and principles—it is support given to an ally against a particular enemy. Moreover, the Social-Democrats render this support in

order to expedite the fall of the common enemy, but expect nothing for themselves from these temporary allies, and concede nothing to them. The Social-Democrats support every revolutionary movement against the present social system, they support all oppressed nationalities, persecuted religions, downtrodden social estates, etc., in their fight for equal rights.

Support for all elements of the political opposition will be expressed in the propaganda of the Social-Democrats by the fact that, in showing that the autocracy is hostile to the workers' cause, they will also point to its hostility towards various other social groups; they will point to the solidarity of the working class with these groups on a particular issue, in a particular task, etc. In agitation, this support will be expressed by the Social-Democrats' taking advantage of every manifestation of the police tyranny of the autocracy to point out to the workers how this tyranny affects all Russian citizens in general, and the representatives of the exceptionally oppressed social estates, nationalities, religions, sects, etc., in particular; and how that tyranny affects the working class especially. Finally, in practice, this support is expressed in the readiness of the Russian Social-Democrats to enter into alliances with revolutionaries of other trends for the purpose of achieving certain particular aims, and this readiness has been shown in practice on more than one occasion.

This brings us to the second question. While pointing to the solidarity of one or other of the various opposition groups with the workers, the Social-Democrats will always single out the workers from the rest, they will always point out that this solidarity is temporary and conditional, they will always emphasize the independent class identity of the proletariat,

who tomorrow may find themselves in opposition to their allies of today. We shall be told that "such action will weaken all the fighters for political liberty at the present time." We shall reply that such action will strengthen all the fighters for political liberty. Only those fighters are strong who rely on the consciously recognised real interests of certain classes, and any attempt to obscure these class interests, which already play a predominant role in contemporary society, will only weaken the fighters. That is the first point. The second point is that, in the fight against the autocracy, the working class must single itself out, for it is the only thoroughly consistent and unreserved enemy of the autocracy, only between the working class and the autocracy is no compromise possible, only in the working class can democracy find a champion who makes no reservations, is not irresolute and does not look back. The hostility of all other classes, groups and strata of the population towards the autocracy is not unqualified; their democracy always looks back.

The bourgeoisie cannot but realize that industrial and social development is being retarded by the autocracy, but it fears the complete democratization of the political and social system and can at any moment enter into alliance with the autocracy against the proletariat.

The petty bourgeoisie is two-faced by its very nature, and while it gravitates, on the one hand, towards the proletariat and democracy, on the other, it gravitates towards the reactionary classes, tries to hold up the march of history, is apt to be seduced by the experiments and blandishments of the autocracy (for example, the "people's policy"[8] of Alexander III), is capable of concluding an alliance with the ruling classes

against the proletariat for the sake of strengthening its own small-proprietor position. Educated people, and the "intelligentsia" generally, cannot but revolt against the savage police tyranny of the autocracy, which hunts down thought and knowledge; but the material interests of this intelligentsia bind it to the autocracy and to the bourgeoisie, compel it to be inconsistent, to compromise, to sell its oppositional and revolutionary ardour for an official salary, or a share of profits or dividends. As for the democratic elements among the oppressed nationalities and the persecuted religions, everybody knows and sees that the class antagonisms within these categories of the population are much deeper-going and stronger than the solidarity binding all classes within any one category against the autocracy and in favour of democratic institutions.

The proletariat alone can be—and because of its class position must be—a consistently democratic, determined enemy of absolutism, incapable of making any concessions or compromises. The proletariat alone can be the vanguard fighter for political liberty and for democratic institutions. Firstly, this is because political tyranny bears most heavily upon the proletariat whose position gives it no opportunity to secure a modification of that tyranny—it has no access to the higher authorities, not even to the officials, and it has no influence on public opinion. Secondly, the proletariat alone is capable of bringing about the complete democratization of the political and social system, since this would place the system in the hands of the workers. That is why the merging of the democratic activities of the working class with the democratic aspirations of other classes and groups would weaken the democratic movement, would weaken the political struggle,

would make it less determined, less consistent, more likely to compromise On the other hand, if the working class stands out as the vanguard fighter for democratic institutions, this will strength the democratic movement, will strengthen the struggle for political liberty, because the working class will spur on all the other democratic and political opposition elements, will push the liberals towards the political radicals, will push the radicals towards an irrevocable rupture with the whole of the political and social structure of present society. We said above that all socialists in Russia should become Social-Democrats. We now add: all true and consistent democrats in Russia should become Social-Democrats.

We will illustrate what we mean by quoting the following example. Take the civil service, the bureaucracy, as representing a special category of persons who specialize in the work of administration and occupy a privileged position as compared with the people. We see this institution everywhere, from autocratic and semi-Asiatic Russia to cultured. free and civilized England, as an essential organ of bourgeois society. The complete lack of rights of the people in relation to government officials and the complete absence of control over the privileged bureaucracy correspond to the backwardness of Russia and to its absolutism In England powerful popular control is exercised over the administration, but even there that control is far from being complete, even there the bureaucracy retains not a few of its privileges, and not infrequently is the master and not the servant of the people. Even in England we see that powerful social groups support the privileged position of the bureaucracy and hinder the complete democratization of that institution. Why? Because it is in the interests of the proletariat alone to democratize it completely ; the most

progressive strata of the bourgeoisie defend certain prerogatives of the bureaucracy and are opposed to the election of all officials, opposed to the complete abolition of electoral qualifications, opposed to making officials directly responsible to the people, etc., because these strata realize that the proletariat will take advantage of such complete democratisation in order to use it against the bourgeoisie. This is the case in Russia, too. Many and most diverse strata of the Russian people are opposed to the omnipotent, irresponsible, corrupt, savage, ignorant and parasitic Russian bureaucracy. But except for the proletariat, not one of these strata would agree to the complete democratisation of the bureaucracy, because all these strata (bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, the "intelligentsia" in general) have some ties with the bureaucracy, because all these strata are kith and kinof the Russian bureaucracy. Who does not know how easy it is in Holy Russia for a radical intellectual, or socialist intellectual, to turn into an official of The Imperial Government, an official who takes comfort from the thought that he does "good" within the limits of office routine, an official who pleads this "good" in justification of his political indifference, his servility towards the government of the knout and the whip? The proletariat alone is unreservedly hostile to the autocracy and the Russian bureaucracy, the proletariat alone has no ties with these organs of aristocratic bourgeois society and the proletariat alone is capable of irreconcilable hostility towards them and of waging a determined struggle against them.

When we show that the proletariat, led in its class struggle by Social-Democracy, is the vanguard fighter of Russian democracy, we encounter the very widespread and very strange opinion that Russian Social-Democracy relegates

political tasks and political struggle to the background. As we see, this opinion is the very opposite of the truth. How are we to explain this astonishing failure to understand the principles of Social-Democracy that have often been expounded and were expounded in the very first Russian Social-Democratic publications, in the pamphlets and books published abroad by the Emancipation of Labour group? In our view, the explanation of this amazing fact lies in the following three circumstances.

First, it lies in the general failure of the representatives of old revolutionary theories to understand the principles of Social-Democracy, accustomed as they are to base their programmes and plans of activity on abstract ideas and not on an exact appraisal of the actual classes operating in the country, classes that have been placed in certain relationships by history. This lack of realistic discussion of the interests which support Russian democracy can only give rise to the opinion that Russian Social-Democracy leaves the democratic tasks of Russian revolutionaries in the background.

Second, it lies in the failure to understand that when economic and political issues, and socialist and democratic activities, are united into one whole, into the single class struggle of the proletariat, this does not weaken but strengthens the democratic movement and the political struggle, by bringing it closer to the real interests of the mass of the people, dragging political issues out of the "stuffy studies of the intelligentsia" into the street, into the midst of the workers and labouring classes, and replacing abstract ideas by real manifestations of political oppression from which the greatest sufferers are the proletariat, and on the basis of which the Social-Democrats

conduct their agitation. It often seems to the Russian radical that instead of frankly and directly calling upon the advanced workers to join the political struggle, the Social-Democrat points to the task of developing the working-class movement, of organising the class struggle of the proletariat, and thereby retreats from his democracy, relegates the political struggle to the background. But if this is retreat, it is the kind of retreat that is meant in the French proverb: "Il faut reculer pour mieux sauter !" (Step back in order to leap farther forward.)

Third, the misunderstanding arises from the fact that the very term "political struggle" means something different to the Narodovoltsi and Narodopravtsi, on the one hand, and to the Social-Democrats, on the other. The Social-Democrats understand the political struggle differently, they understand it much more broadly than do the representatives of the old revolutionary theories. A clear illustration of this seeming paradox is provided by the Leaflet of the Narodnaya Volya Group, No. 4, December 9, 1895. While heartily welcoming this publication, which testifies to the profound and fruitful thinking that is going on among the present-day Narodovoltsi, we cannot refrain from mentioning P. L. Lavrov's article, "Programme questions" (pp. 19-22), which vividly reveals the different conception of the political struggle entertained by the old-style Narodovoltsi.[1] "... Here," writes P. L. Lavrov, speaking of the relation of the Narodnaya Volya programme to the Social-Democratic programme, "one thing and one thing alone is material, viz., is it possible to organise a strong workers' party under the autocracy and to do so apart from the organisation of a revolutionary party directed against the autocracy?" (p. 21, col. 2); also a little before that (in col. 1): ". . . to organise a Russian workers' party while autocracy reigns

without at the same time organising a revolutionary party against this autocracy." We cannot at all understand these distinctions which seem to be of such cardinal importance to P. L. Lavrov. What is the meaning of "a workers' party apart from a revolutionary party against the autocracy"?? Is not a workers' party itself a revolutionary party? Is it not directed against the autocracy? This queer idea is explained in the following passage in P. L. Lavrov's article: "A Russian workers' party will have to be organised under the rule of the autocracy with all its charms. If the Social-Democrats succeeded in doing this without at the same time organising a political conspiracy[2] against the autocracy, with all that goes with such a conspiracy,[3] then, of course, their political programme would be a fit and proper programme for Russian socialists, since the emancipation of the workers by the efforts of the workers themselves would be accomplished. But this is very doubtful, if not impossible" (p. 21, col. 1).

So that's the point! To the Narodovoltsi, the term political struggle is synonymous with the term political conspiracy ! It must be confessed that in these words P. L. Lavrov has managed to bring out in bold relief the fundamental difference between the tactics in the political struggle adopted by the Narodovoltsi and by the Social-Democrats. Blanquist,[10] conspiratorial traditions are fearfully strong among the former, so much so that they cannot conceive of political struggle except in the form of political conspiracy. The Social-Democrats, however, are not guilty of such a narrow outlook; they do not believe in conspiracies; they think that the period of conspiracies has long passed away, that to reduce political struggle to conspiracy means, on the one hand, immensely restricting its scope, and, on the other hand, choosing the most

unsuitable methods of struggle. Everyone will understand that P. L. Lavrov's remark that "the Russian Social-Democrats take the activities of the West as an unfailing model" (p. 21, col. 1) is nothing more than a polemical manoeuvre, and that actually the Russian Social-Democrats have never forgotten the political conditions here, they have never dreamed of being able to form a workers' party in Russia legally, they have never separated the task of fighting for socialism from that of fighting for political liberty. But they have always thought, and continue to think, that this fight must be waged not by conspirators, but by a revolutionary party based on the working-class movement. They think that the fight against the autocracy must consist not in organising conspiracies, but in educating, disciplining and organising the proletariat, in political agitation among the workers which denounces every manifestation of absolutism, which pillories all the knights of the police government and compels this government to make concessions. Is this not precisely the kind of activity being conducted by the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class? Does not this organisation represent the embryo of a revolutionary party based on the working-class movement, which leads the class struggle of the proletariat against capital and against the autocratic government without hatching any conspiracies, while deriving its strength from the combination of socialist and democratic struggle into the single, indivisible class struggle of the St. Petersburg proletariat? Brief as they may have been, have not the activities of the League already shown that the proletariat, led by Social-Democracy, is a big political force with which the government is already compelled to reckon, and to which it hastens to make concessions? Both the haste with which the law of June 2, 1897,

was passed, and the content of that law clearly reveal its significance as a concession wrung by the proletariat, as a position won from the enemy of the Russian people. This concession is a very tiny one, the position won is very small, but the working-class organisation that has succeeded in forcing this concession is also not distinguished for breadth, stability, long standing or wealth of experience or resources. As is well known, the League of Struggle was formed only in 1895-96, and its appeals to the workers have been confined to hectographed or lithographed leaflets. Can it he denied that an organisation like this, if it united, at least, the biggest centres of the working-class movement in Russia (the St. Petersburg, Moscow-Vladimir, and the southern areas, and also the most important towns like Odessa, Kiev, Saratov, etc.), if it had a revolutionary organ at its disposal and enjoyed as much prestige among the Russian workers generally as the League of Struggle does among the St. Petersburg workers—can it be denied that such an organisation would be a tremendous political factor in contemporary Russia, a factor that the government would have to reckon with in its entire home and foreign policy. By leading the class struggle of the proletariat, developing organisation and discipline among the workers, helping them to fight for their immediate economic needs and to win position after position from capital, by politically educating the workers and systematically and unswervingly attacking the autocracy and making life a torment for every tsarist bashi-bazouk who makes the proletariat feel the heavy paw of the police government—such an organisation would at one and the same time be a workers' party organisation adapted to our conditions, and a powerful revolutionary party directed against the autocracy. To discuss in advance what methods this organisation will resort

to in order to deliver a smashing blow at the autocracy, whether, for example, it will prefer insurrection, a mass political strike, or some other form of attack, to discuss these things in advance and to decide this question now would be empty doctrinairism. It would be akin to generals calling a council of war before they had mustered their troops, mobilised them, and under taken a campaign against the enemy. When the army of the proletariat fights unswervingly and under the leader ship of a strong Social-Democratic organisation for its economic and political emancipation, that army will itself indicate the methods and means of action to the generals. Then, and then only, will it be possible to decide the question of striking the final blow at the autocracy; for the solution of the problem depends on the state of the working-class movement, on its breadth, on the methods of struggle developed by the movement, on the qualities of the revolutionary organisation leading the movement, on the attitude of other social elements to the proletariat and to the autocracy, on the conditions governing home and foreign politics—in a word, it depends on a thousand and one things which cannot be guessed, and which it would be useless to try to guess in advance.

That is why the following argument of P. L. Lavrov's is also extremely unfair:

"If, however, they" (the Social-Democrats) "have, in one way or another, not only to group the workers' forces for the struggle against capital, but also to rally revolutionary individuals and groups for the struggle against the autocracy, the Russian Social-Democrats will actually be adopting the programme of their opponents, the Narodnaya Volya, no matter what they may call themselves. Differences of opinion concerning the

village community, the destiny of capitalism in Russia and economic materialism are points of detail of very little importance to the real cause, either facilitating or hindering the solution of particular problems, particular methods of preparing the main points, but nothing more" (p. 21, col. 1).

It is strange to have to challenge this last proposition—that differences of opinion on the fundamental questions of Russian life and of the development of Russian society, on the fundamental problems of the conception of history, concern only "points of detail"! It was said long ago that without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement, and it is hardly necessary to advance proof of this truth at the present time. The theory of the class struggle, the materialist conception of Russian history and the materialist appraisal of the present economic and political situation in Russia, recognition of the need to relate the revolutionary struggle strictly to the definite interests of a definite class and to analyse its relation to other classes—to call these great revolutionary questions "points of detail" is so colossally wrong and unexpected, coming from a veteran of revolutionary theory, that we are almost prepared to regard this passage as a lapsus. As for the first part of the tirade quoted, its unfairness is still more astonishing. To state in print that the Russian Social-Democrats only group the workers' forces for the struggle against capital (i.e., only for the economic struggle!) and do not rally revolutionary individuals and groups for the struggle against the autocracy, means that the author either does not know or does not want to know generally known facts concerning the activities of the Russian Social-Democrats. Or, perhaps, P. L. Lavrov does not regard the Social-Democrats who are engaged in practical work in Russia as "revolutionary

individuals" and "revolutionary groups"?! Or (and this, perhaps, is more likely) by "struggle" against the autocracy he means only conspiracies against it? (Cf. p. 21, col. 2: ". . . it is a matter of . . . organising a revolutionary conspiracy"; our italics.) Perhaps, in P. L. Lavrov's opinion, those who do not organise political conspiracies are not engaged in political struggle? We repeat once again: opinions like these fully correspond to the old-time traditions of the old-time Narodnaya Volya, but do not correspond at all either to contemporary conceptions of the political struggle or to contemporary conditions.

We have still to say a few words about the Narodopravtsi. P. L. Lavrov is quite right, in our opinion, when he says that the Social-Democrats "recommend the Narodopravtsi as being more frank, and are ready to support them, without, however, merging with them" (p. 19, col. 2); he should only have added: as more frank democrats, and to the degree that the Narodopravtsi act as consistent democrats. Unfortunately, this condition is more a matter of the desired future than of the actual present. The Narodopravtsi expressed a desire to free the democratic tasks from Narodism and from the obsolete forms of "Russian socialism" generally; but they themselves were still far from being freed from old prejudices, and were far from consistent when they described their party, exclusively a party for political reforms, as a "social (??!)-revolutionary" party (see their "Manifesto" dated February 19, 1894), and declared in their "Manifesto" that "the term people's rights includes the organisation of people's industry" (we are obliged to quote from memory) and thus introduced Narodnik prejudices sub rosa. Hence, P. L. Lavrov was, perhaps, not altogether wrong when he described them as "masquerade politicians" (p. 20, col.

2). But perhaps it would be fairer to regard the doctrine of Narodnoye Pravo as transitional, to the credit of which it must be said that it was ashamed of the original character of the Narodnik doctrines and openly gave battle to those most abominable Narodnik reactionaries who, despite the existence of absolute rule by the police and the upper class, have the audacity to speak of the desirability of economic and not political reforms (see "An Urgent Question," published by the Narodnoye Pravo Party). If the Narodnoye Pravo Party does not really contain anybody but ex-socialists who conceal their socialist banner for tactical considerations, and who merely don the mask of non-socialist politicians (as P. L. Lavrov assumes, p. 20, col. 2), then, of course, that party has no future whatever. If, however, the party also contains not masquerade, but real non-socialist politicians, non-socialist democrats, then this party can do no little good by striving to draw closer to the political opposition among our bourgeoisie, by striving to arouse the political consciousness of our petty bourgeoisie, small shopkeepers, small artisans, etc.—the class which, everywhere in Western Europe, played a part in the democratic movement and, in Russia, has made exceptionally rapid progress in cultural and other respects in the post-Reform period, and which cannot avoid feeling the oppression of the police government that gives its cynical support to the big factory owners, the magnates of finance and industrial monopoly. All that is needed for this is that the Narodopravtsi should make it their task to draw closer to various strata of the population and should not confine themselves to the very same "intelligentsia" whose impotence, owing to their isolation from the real interests of the masses, is admitted even in "An Urgent Question." What is needed is that the Narodopravtsi abandon

all idea of merging different social elements and of pushing socialism aside in favour of political tasks, that they abandon the false shame which prevents them from drawing closer to the bourgeois strata of the population, i.e., that they not only talk about a programme for non-socialist politicians, but act according to this programme, rousing and developing the class-consciousness of those social groups and classes for whom socialism is quite unnecessary, but who, as time goes on, increasingly feel the oppression of the autocracy and the need for political liberty.

Russian Social-Democracy is still very young. It is only just emerging from its embryonic state in which theoretical questions predominated. It is only just beginning to develop its practical activity. In place of criticism of Social-Democratic theories and programmes, revolutionaries of other parties have of necessity moved on to criticism of the practical activity of the Russian Social-Democrats. And it must be admitted that this latter criticism differs most sharply from the criticism of theory, differs so much, in fact, that it was possible to float the comical rumour that the St. Petersburg League of Struggle is not a Social-Democratic organisation. The very fact that such a rumour appeared shows how unfounded is the accusation now current that the Social-Democrats ignore the political struggle. The very fact that such a rumour appeared shows that many revolutionaries whom the Social-Democrats' theory could not convince are beginning to be convinced by their practice.

Russian Social-Democracy is still faced with an enormous, almost untouched field of work. The awakening of the Russian working class, its spontaneous striving for knowledge, organisation, socialism, for the struggle against its exploiters

and oppressors becomes more widespread, more strikingly apparent every day. The enormous progress made by Russian capitalism in recent times is a guarantee that the working-class movement will grow uninterruptedly in breadth and depth. We are apparently now passing through the period in the capitalist cycle when industry is "prospering," when business is brisk, when the factories are working at full capacity and when countless new factories, new enterprises, joint-stock companies, railway enterprises, etc., etc., are springing up like mushrooms. One need not be a prophet to foretell the inevitable and fairly sharp crash that is bound to succeed this period of industrial "prosperity." This crash will ruin masses of small owners, will throw masses of workers into the ranks of the unemployed, and will thus confront all the workers in an acute form with the problems of socialism and democracy which have long faced every class-conscious, every thinking worker. Russian Social-Democrats must see to it that when this crash comes the Russian proletariat is more class-conscious, more united, able to understand the tasks of the Russian working class, capable of putting up resistance to the capitalist class—which is now reaping huge profits and always strives to burden the workers with the losses—and capable of leading Russian democracy in a decisive struggle against the police autocracy, which binds and fetters the Russian workers and the whole of the Russian people.

And so, to work, comrades! Let us not lose precious time! Russian Social-Democrats have much to do to meet the requirements of the awakening proletariat, to organise the working-class movement, to strengthen the revolutionary groups and their mutual ties, to supply the workers with propaganda and agitational literature, and to unite the workers'

circles and Social-Democratic groups scattered all over Russia into a single Social-Democratic Labour Party!

To the Workers and Socialists of St. Petersburg From the League of Struggle

The St. Petersburg revolutionaries are experiencing hard times. It seems that the government has concentrated all its forces for the purpose of crushing the recently born working-class movement which has given such a display of strength. Arrests are being made on an unprecedented scale and the prisons are overcrowded. Intellectuals, men and women, and masses of workers are being dragged off and exiled. Almost every day brings news of ever new victims of the police government, which has flung itself in fury upon its enemies. The government has set itself the aim of preventing the new trend in the Russian revolutionary movement from gaining strength and getting on its feet. The public prosecutors and gendarmes are already boasting that they have smashed the League of Struggle.

This boast is a lie. The League of Struggle is intact, despite all the persecution. With deep satisfaction we declare that the wholesale arrests are doing their job—they are a powerful weapon of agitation among the workers and socialist intellectuals, that the places of the fallen revolutionaries are being taken by new people who are ready, with fresh energy, to join the ranks of the champions of the Russian proletariat and of the entire people of Russia. There can be no struggle without sacrifice, and to the brutal persecution of the tsarist bashi-bazouks we calmly reply: Revolutionaries have perished—long live the revolution!

So far, increased persecution has only been able to cause a temporary weakening of certain functions of the League of Struggle, a temporary shortage of agents and agitators. This is the shortage that we now feel and that impels us to call upon all class-conscious workers and all intellectuals desirous of devoting their energies to the revolutionary cause. The League of Struggle needs agents. Let all study circles and all individuals desirous of working in any sphere of revolutionary activity, even the most restricted, inform those in touch with the League of Struggle. (Should any group be unable to contact such individuals—this is very unlikely—they can do so through the League of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad.) People are needed for all kinds of work, and the more strictly revolutionaries specialise in the various aspects of revolutionary activity, the more strictly they give thought to their methods of underground work and ways of screening it, the more selflessly they concentrate on the minor, unseen, particular jobs, the safer will the whole thing be and the more difficult will it be for the gendarmes and spies to discover the revolutionaries. In advance the government has enmeshed not only the existing centres of anti-government elements, but also possible and probable ones, in a network of agents. The government is steadily developing the size and range of the activities of those of its lackeys who are hounding revolutionaries, is devising new methods, introducing more provocateurs, trying to exert pressure on the arrested by means of intimidation, confrontation with false testimony, forged signatures, planting faked letters, etc., etc. Without a strengthening and development of revolutionary discipline, organisation and underground activity, struggle against the government is impossible. And underground activity demands

above all that groups and individuals specialise in different aspects of work and that the job of co-ordination be assigned to the central group of the League of Struggle, with as few members as possible. The aspects of revolutionary work are extremely varied. Legal agitators are needed who can talk to the workers in a way that does not render them liable to prosecution, and can say just a, leaving it to others to say b and c. Literature and leaflet distributors are needed. Organisers of workers' study circles and groups are needed. Correspondents are needed who can give a complete picture of events in all factories. People are needed who will keep an eye on spies and provocateurs. People are needed who will arrange underground meeting places. People are needed to deliver literature, transmit instructions, and to arrange all kinds of contacts. Fund collectors are needed. Agents are needed to work among the intelligentsia and government officials, people in contact with the workers and factory life, with the administration (with the police, factory inspectors, etc.). People are needed for contact with the different towns of Russia and other countries. People are needed to arrange various ways of running off all sorts of literature. People are needed to look after literature and other things, etc., etc. The smaller and more specific the job undertaken by the individual person or individual group, the greater will be the chance that they will think things out, do the job properly and guarantee it best against failure, that they will consider all the details of underground work and use all possible means of hoodwinking and misleading the gendarmes, the more will success be assured, the harder will it be for the police and gendarmes to keep track of the revolutionaries and their links with their organisations, and the easier for the revolutionary party to

replace, without prejudice to the cause as a whole, agents and members who have fallen. We know that specialisation of this kind is a very difficult matter, difficult because it demands from the individual the greatest endurance and selflessness, demands the giving of all one's strength to work that is inconspicuous, monotonous, that deprives one of contact with comrades and subordinates the revolutionary's entire life to a grim and rigid routine. But it was only in conditions such as these that the greatest men of revolutionary practice in Russia succeeded in carrying out the boldest undertakings, spending years on all-round preparation, and we are profoundly convinced that the Social-Democrats will prove no less self-sacrificing than the revolutionaries of previous generations. We are also aware that the preliminary period envisaged by our system during which the League of Struggle will collect the necessary information about individuals or groups offering their services and give them something to do by way of trial will be a very difficult one for many people eager to devote their energies to revolutionary work. But without this preliminary testing, revolutionary activity in present-day Russia is impossible.

In suggesting this system of work to our new comrades we are expressing a view arrived at after long experience, being deeply convinced that it best of all guarantees successful revolutionary work.

The years of preparation of the revolution (1903-05)

Vladimir Lenin's

"Left-Wing" Communism: an Infantile Disorder

The Principal Stages in the History of Bolshevism

The approach of a great storm was sensed everywhere. All classes were in a state of ferment and preparation. Abroad, the press of the political exiles discussed the theoretical aspects of all the fundamental problems of the revolution. Representatives of the three main classes, of the three principal political trends—the liberal-bourgeois, the petty-bourgeois-democratic (concealed behind "social-democratic" and "social-revolutionary" labels [2]), and the proletarian-revolutionary—anticipated and prepared the impending open class struggle by waging a most bitter struggle on issues of programme and tactics. All the issues on which the masses waged an armed struggle in 1905–07 and 1917–20 can (and should) be studied, in their embryonic form, in the press of the period. Among these three main trends there were, of course, a host of intermediate, transitional or half-hearted forms. It would be more correct to say that those political and ideological trends which were genuinely of a class nature crystallised in the struggle of press organs, parties, factions and groups; the classes were forging the requisite political and ideological weapons for the impending battles.

The years of revolution (1905–07). All classes came out into the open. All programmatical and tactical views were tested by the action of the masses. In its extent and acuteness, the strike struggle had no parallel anywhere in the world. The economic strike developed into a political strike, and the latter into

insurrection. The relations between the proletariat, as the leader, and the vacillating and unstable peasantry, as the led, were tested in practice. The Soviet form of organisation came into being in the spontaneous development of the struggle. The controversies of that period over the significance of the Soviets anticipated the great struggle of 1917–20. The alternation of parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle, of the tactics of boycotting parliament and that of participating in parliament, of legal and illegal forms of struggle, and likewise their interrelations and connections—all this was marked by an extraordinary wealth of content. As for teaching the fundamentals of political science to masses and leaders, to classes and parties alike, each month of this period was equivalent to an entire year of "peaceful" and "constitutional" development. Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905, the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 would have been impossible.

The years of reaction (1907–10). Tsarism was victorious. All the revolutionary and opposition parties were smashed. Depression, demoralisation, splits, discord, defection, and pornography took the place of politics. There was an ever greater drift towards philosophical idealism; mysticism became the garb of counter-revolutionary sentiments. At the same time, however, it was this great defeat that taught the revolutionary parties and the revolutionary class a real and very useful lesson, a lesson in historical dialectics, a lesson in an understanding of the political struggle, and in the art and science of waging that struggle. It is at moments of need that one learns who one's friends are. Defeated armies learn their lesson.

Victorious tsarism was compelled to speed up the destruction of the remnants of the pre-bourgeois, patriarchal mode of life in

Russia. The country's development along bourgeois lines proceeded apace. Illusions that stood outside and above class distinctions, illusions concerning the possibility of avoiding capitalism, were scattered to the winds. The class struggle manifested itself in a quite new and more distinct way.

The revolutionary parties had to complete their education. They were learning how to attack. Now they had to realise that such knowledge must be supplemented with the knowledge of how to retreat in good order. They had to realise—and it is from bitter experience that the revolutionary class learns to realise this—that victory is impossible unless one has learned how to attack and retreat properly. Of all the defeated opposition and revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat, with the least loss to their "army", with its core best preserved, with the least significant splits (in point of depth and incurability), with the least demoralisation, and in the best condition to resume work on the broadest scale and in the most correct and energetic manner. The Bolsheviks achieved this only because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrase-mongers, those who did not wish to understand that one had to retreat, that one had to know how to retreat, and that one had absolutely to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary of parliaments, in the most reactionary of trade unions, co-operative and insurance societies and similar organisations.

The years of revival (1910–14). At first progress was incredibly slow, then, following the Lena events of 1912, it became somewhat more rapid. Overcoming unprecedented difficulties, the Bolsheviks thrust back the Mensheviks, whose role as bourgeois agents in the working-class movement was clearly

realised by the entire bourgeoisie after 1905, and whom the bourgeoisie therefore supported in a thousand ways against the Bolsheviks. But the Bolsheviks would never have succeeded in doing this had they not followed the correct tactics of combining illegal work with the utilisation of "legal opportunities", which they made a point of doing. In the elections to the arch-reactionary Duma, the Bolsheviks won the full support of the worker curia.

The First Imperialist World War (1914–17). Legal parliamentarianism, with an extremely reactionary "parliament", rendered most useful service to the Bolsheviks, the party of the revolutionary proletariat. The Bolshevik deputies were exiled to Siberia. All shades of social-imperialism social-chauvinism, social-patriotism, inconsistent and consistent internationalism, pacifism, and the revolutionary repudiation of pacifist illusions found full expression in the Russian émigré press. The learned fools and the old women of the Second International, who had arrogantly and contemptuously turned up their noses at the abundance of "factions" in the Russian socialist movement and at the bitter struggle they were waging among themselves, were unable— when the war deprived them of their vaunted "legality" in all the advanced countries— to organise anything even approximating such a free (illegal) interchange of views and such a free (illegal) evolution of correct views as the Russian revolutionaries did in Switzerland and in a number of other countries. That was why both the avowed social-patriots and the "Kautskyites" of all countries proved to be the worst traitors to the proletariat. One of the principal reasons why Bolshevism was able to achieve victory in 1917–20 was that, since the end of 1914, it has been ruthlessly exposing the baseness and vileness

of social-chauvinism and "Kautskyism" (to which Longuetism in France, the views of the Fabians [6] and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party in Britain, of Turati in Italy, etc., correspond), the masses later becoming more and more convinced, from their own experience, of the correctness of the Bolshevik views.

The second revolution in Russia (February to October 1917). Tsarism's senility and obsoleteness had (with the aid of the blows and hardships of a most agonising war) created an incredibly destructive force directed against it. Within a few days Russia was transformed into a democratic bourgeois republic, freer—in war conditions—than any other country in the world. The leaders of the opposition and revolutionary parties began to set up a government, just as is done in the most "strictly parliamentary" republics; the fact that a man had been a leader of an opposition party in parliament—even in a most reactionary parliament—facilitated his subsequent role in the revolution.

In a few weeks the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries thoroughly assimilated all the methods and manners, the arguments and sophistries of the European heroes of the Second International, of the ministerialists [8] and other opportunist riff-raff. Everything we now read about the Scheidemanns and Noskes, about Kautsky and Hilferding, Renner and Austerlitz, Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler, Turati and Longuet, about the Fabians and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party of Britain—all this seems to us (and indeed is) a dreary repetition, a reiteration, of an old and familiar refrain. We have already witnessed all this in the instance of the Mensheviks. As history would have it, the opportunists of a

backward country became the forerunners of the opportunists in a number of advanced countries.

If the heroes of the Second International have all gone bankrupt and have disgraced themselves over the question of the significance and role of the Soviets and Soviet rule; if the leaders of the three very important parties which have now left the Second International (namely, the German Independent Social-Democratic Party, the French Longuetists and the British Independent Labour Party) have disgraced themselves and become entangled in this question in a most "telling" fashion; if they have all shown themselves slaves to the prejudices of petty-bourgeois democracy (fully in the spirit of the petty-bourgeois of 1848 who called themselves "Social-Democrats")—then we can only say that we have already witnessed all this in the instance of the Mensheviks. As history would have it, the Soviets came into being in Russia in 1905; from February to October 1917 they were turned to a false use by the Mensheviks, who went bankrupt because of their inability to understand the role and significance of the Soviets; today the idea of Soviet power has emerged throughout the world and is spreading among the proletariat of all countries with extraordinary speed. Like our Mensheviks, the old heroes of the Second International are everywhere going bankrupt, because they are incapable of understanding the role and significance of the Soviets. Experience has proved that, on certain very important questions of the proletarian revolution, all countries will inevitably have to do what Russia has done.

Despite views that are today often to be met with in Europe and America, the Bolsheviks began their victorious struggle against the parliamentary and (in fact) bourgeois republic and against

the Mensheviks in a very cautious manner, and the preparations they made for it were by no means simple. At the beginning of the period mentioned, we did not call for the overthrow of the government but explained that it was impossible to overthrow it without first changing the composition and the temper of the Soviets. We did not proclaim a boycott of the bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, but said—and following the April (1917) Conference of our Party began to state officially in the name of the Party—that a bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly would be better than a bourgeois republic without a Constituent Assembly, but that a "workers' and peasants' " republic, a Soviet republic, would be better than any bourgeois-democratic, parliamentary republic. Without such thorough, circumspect and long preparations, we could not have achieved victory in October 1917, or have consolidated that victory.

V. I. Lenin

The Autocracy and the Proletariat

Vperyod, No. 1, January 4, 1905 (December 22, 1904)

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 8, pages 17-28.

Russia is experiencing a resurgence of the constitutional movement. Our generation has never witnessed anything like the present political ferment. Legal newspapers are attacking the bureaucracy, demanding participation of the people's representatives in the state administration, and pressing for liberal reforms. All varieties of meetings of Zemstvo officials,doctors, lawyers, engineers, farmers, municipal councillors, etc., etc., are adopting resolutions more or less definitely demanding a constitution. Passionate appeals for liberty and political accusations of a boldness to which the Russian man in the street is unaccustomed can be heard at every turn. Under pressure of the workers and the radical youth, liberal gatherings are converted into open public meetings and street demonstrations. Undercurrents of discontent are manifestly stirring among wide sections of the proletariat, among the poor of town and country. Although the proletariat is taking a comparatively small part in the more spectacular and ceremonious manifestations of the liberal movement, although it seems to be standing somewhat aloof from the polite conferences of the solid citizens, everything points to the fact that the workers are keenly interested in the movement. Everything points to the fact that the workers are eager for big public meetings and open street demonstrations. The proletariat is holding itself back, as it were, carefully taking its bearings, gathering its forces, and deciding the question whether or not the moment for the decisive struggle for freedom has come.

Apparently, the wave of liberal excitation is beginning to subside somewhat. The rumours and foreign newspaper re ports to the effect that reactionaries have gained the upper hand in the most influential Court circles are being confirmed. The ukase of Nicholas II, published the other day, was a direct slap in the face for the liberals. The tsar intends to preserve and uphold the autocratic regime. The tsar does not want to change the form of government and has no intention of granting a constitution. He promises—only promises—all manner of reforms of a quite paltry nature. No guarantees, of course, are given that these reforms will really be implemented. Police restrictions against the liberal press are becoming daily and hourly more stringent. All open demonstrations are being suppressed again, if anything, with greater severity than before. The screw is being put on the liberal councillors again, both Zemstvo and municipal, still more so in the case of those officials who play the liberal. The liberal newspapers are falling into a despondent tone and apologising to their correspondents for not publishing their letters, which they dare not do.

It is quite within the realm of possibility that the wave of liberal agitation which rose so rapidly after the permission granted by Svyatopolk-Mirsky will abate just as quickly after the new ban. One must distinguish between the profound causes, which inevitably and unavoidably lead—and will lead more and more—to opposition and struggle against the autocracy, and the trivial reasons of a passing liberal ferment. The profound causes lead to profound, powerful, and persistent popular movements. Trivial reasons are at times Cabinet changes or the usual attempt on the part of the government to pursue for an hour the policy of "the sly fox" after some terrorist act. The assassination of Plehve evidently cost the terrorist organisation

tremendous effort and involved long preparation. The very success of this terrorist act hears out all the more strikingly the experience of the entire history of the Russian revolutionary movement, which warns us against such methods of struggle as terrorism. Russian terrorism has always been a specifically intellectualist method of struggle. And whatever may be said of the importance of terrorism, not in lieu of, but in conjunction with, the people's movement, the facts irrefutably testify that in our country individual political assassinations have nothing in common with the forcible actions of the people's revolution. In capitalist society a mass movement is possible only as a class movement of the workers. This movement is developing in Russia according to its own independent laws; it is proceeding in its own way, gaining in depth and in breadth, and passing from a temporary lull to a new upsurge. It is only the liberal wave that rises and falls strictly in accord with the moods of the different ministers, whose replacement is accelerated by bombs. Small wonder, then, that sympathy with terrorism is to be met with so often in our country among the radical (or radical-posing) representatives of the bourgeois Opposition. Small wonder that; among the revolutionary intelligentsia, the people most likely to be carried away (whether for long or for a moment) by terrorism are those who have no faith in the vitality and strength of the proletariat and the proletarian class struggle.

The fact that the spurt of liberal activity for one or another reason is short-lived and unstable cannot, of course, make us forget the irremovable contradiction that exists between the autocracy and the needs of the developing bourgeois society. The autocracy is bound to be a drag on social development. The interests of the bourgeoisie as a class, as well as the interests of

the intelligentsia, without which modern capitalist production is inconceivable, clash more and more with the autocracy as time goes on. Superficial though the reason for the liberals' declarations may be and petty though the character of the liberals' half-hearted and equivocal position, the autocracy can maintain real peace only with a handful of highly privileged magnates from the landowning and merchant class, but in no sense with that class as a whole. Direct representation of the interests of the ruling class in the form of a constitution is essential for a country that wants to be a European country and, on pain of political and economic defeat, is obliged by its position to become a European country. It is therefore extremely important for the class-conscious proletariat to have a clear understanding both of the inevitability of the liberals' protests against the autocracy and of the actual bourgeois character of these protests.

The working class is setting itself the great and epoch- making aims of liberating humanity from every form of oppression and exploitation of man by man. Throughout the World it has striven hard for decades on end to achieve these aims, steadily widening its struggle and organising itself in mass parties, undaunted by occasional defeats and temporary set-backs. Nothing can be more vital for such a truly revolutionary class than to rid itself of all self-deception, of all mirages and illusions.One of the most widespread and persistent illusions with us in Russia is the notion that our liberal movement is not a bourgeois movement, and that the impending revolution in Russia will not be a bourgeois revolution. The Russian intellectual, from the most moderateOsvobozhdeniye liberal to the most extreme Socialist-Revolutionary, always thinks that one makes our revolution colourless, that one degrades and

vulgarises it, by admitting it to be a bourgeois revolution. To the Russian class-conscious proletarian this admission is the only true class characterisation of the actual state of affairs. To the proletarian the struggle for political liberty and a democratic republic in a bourgeois society is only one of the necessary stages in the struggle for the social revolution which will overthrow the bourgeois system. Strictly differentiating between stages that are essentially different, soberly examining the conditions under which they manifest themselves, does not at all mean indefinitely postponing one's ultimate aim, or slowing down one's progress in advance. On the contrary, it is for the purpose of accelerating the advance and of achieving the ultimate aim as quickly and securely as possible that it is necessary to understand the relation of classes in modern society. Nothing but disillusionment and unending vacillation await those who shun the allegedly one-sided class point of view, who would be socialists, yet are afraid openly to call the impending revolution in Russia—the revolution that has begun in Russia—a bourgeois revolution.

Characteristically, at the very height of the present constitutional movement, the more democratic of the legal publications took advantage of the unusual freedom to at tack, not only the "bureaucracy", but also the "exclusive and hence erroneous theory of the class struggle" which is alleged to be "scientifically untenable" (Nasha Zhizn, No. 28). If you please, the problem of bringing the intelligentsia closer to the masses "has hitherto been dealt with solely by throwing the emphasis on the class contradictions existing between the masses and those sections of society from which ... the greater part of the intelligentsia springs". Needless to say, this presentation of the facts is completely at variance with the real state of affairs. The

very opposite is true. The entire mass of the Russian legally-active uplift intelligentsia, all the old Russian socialists, all political figures of the Osvobozhdeniye type have always completely ignored the profound nature of the class contradictions in Russia in general and in the Russian countryside in particular. Even the extreme Left Russian radical intelligentsia, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, sins most in ignoring this fact; one need only recall its usual arguments about the "labouring peasantry", or about the impending revolution being "not a bourgeois, but a democratic one".

No, the nearer the moment of revolution draws and the more acute the constitutional movement becomes, the more strictly must the party of the proletariat guard its class independence and not allow its class demands to be swamped in general democratic phrases. The more frequently and decidedly the representatives of so-called society come for ward with what they claim to be the demands of the whole people, the more relentlessly must the Social-Democrats expose the class nature of this "society". Take the notorious resolution of the "secret" Zemstvo congress. held on November 6-8. You will find there, thrust into the background, deliberately hazy and half-hearted constitutional aspirations. You will find mention there of the people and society, more often society than the people. You will find the most detailed and comprehensive suggestions for reforms of the Zemstvo and municipal institutions — institutions, that is, which represent the interests of the landowners and the capitalists. You will find mention of reforms in the living conditions of the peasantry, of the liberation of the peasantry from tutelage, and of the safeguarding of correct judicial forms. It is quite clear that you are dealing with representatives of the propertied classes who

are only bent on securing concessions from the autocracy and have no thought of changing in any way the foundations of the economic system. If people like these want a "radical [allegedly radical] change in the present state of inequality and oppression of the peasantry", it only proves anew that the Social-Democrats were right in tirelessly stressing the backwardness of the system and of the living conditions of the peasantry in relation to the general conditions of the bourgeois order. The Social-Democrats have always urged that the class-conscious proletariat should strictly distinguish in the general peasant movement the over-riding interests and demands of the peasant bourgeoisie, however much these demands may be veiled and nebulous, and in whatever cloak of utopian "levelling" the peasant ideology (and "Socialist-Revolutionary" phrase-mongering) may invest them. Take the resolutions of the engineers' banquet in St. Petersburg on December 4. You will find that the 590 banquet guests, and together with them the 6,000 engineers who subscribed to the resolution, declared for a constitution, "without which Russian industry cannot be properly protected", while at the same time protesting against the placing of government orders with foreign concerns.

Can anyone still fail to see that it is the interests of all sections of the landowning, commercial, industrial and peas ant bourgeoisie which are at the bottom of the constitutional aspirations that have erupted to the surface? Are we to be 'led astray by the fact that these interests are represented by the democratic intelligentsia, which everywhere and always, in all European revolutions of the bourgeoisie, has assumed the role of publicists, speakers, and political leaders?

A grave task now confronts the Russian proletariat. 'The autocracy is wavering. The burdensome and hopeless war into which it has plunged has seriously undermined the foundations of its power and rule. It cannot maintain itself in power now without an appeal to the ruling classes, without the support of the intelligentsia; such an appeal and such support, however, are bound to lead to constitutional demands. The bourgeois classes are trying to force an advantage for themselves out of the government's predicament. The government is playing a desperate game; it is trying to wriggle out of its difficulties, to get off with a few paltry concessions, non-political reforms, and non-committal promises, with which the tsar's new ukase is replete. Whether this game will succeed, even temporarily and partially, will in the long run depend on the Russian proletariat, on the degree of its organisation and the force of its revolutionary onset. The proletariat must take advantage of the political situation, which is greatly in its favour. The proletariat must support the constitutional movement of the bourgeoisie; it must rouse and rally to its side the broadest possible sections of the exploited masses, muster all its forces, and start an uprising at the moment when the government is in the most desperate straits and popular unrest is at its highest.

What immediate form should the proletariat's support of the constitutionalists take? Chiefly, the utilisation of the general unrest for the purpose of carrying on agitation and organising the least involved and most backward sections of the working class and the peasantry. Naturally, the organised proletariat, Social-Democracy, should send its forces among all' classes of the population; yet the more independently the classes now act, the more acute the struggle becomes, and the nearer the

moment of the decisive battle approaches, the more should our work be concentrated on preparing the proletarians and semi-proletarians themselves for the direct struggle for freedom. At such a moment only opportunists can qualify the speeches of individual workingmen in Zemstvo and other public assemblies as a very active struggle, or a new method of struggle, or the highest type of demonstration. Such manifestations can only be of quite secondary importance. It is far more important now to turn the attention of the proletariat to really high and active forms of struggle, such as the famous mass demonstration in Rostov and a number of mass demonstrations in the South. It is far more important now to increase our ranks, organise our forces, and prepare for an even more direct and open mass conflict.

Of course, there is no suggestion in this that the ordinary day-to-day work of the Social-Democrats should be abandoned. Social-Democrats will never give up that work, which they regard as the real preparation for the decisive fight; for they rely wholly and exclusively on the activity, the class-consciousness, and the organisation of the proletariat, on its influence among the labouring and exploited masses. It is a question of pointing out the right road, of calling attention to the need for going forward, to the harmfulness of tactical vacillations. The day-to-day work, which the class-conscious proletariat should never forget under any circumstances, includes also the work of organisation. Without broad and diverse workers' organisations, and without their connection with revolutionary Social-Democracy, it is impossible to wage a successful struggle against the autocracy. On the other hand, organisational work is impossible without a firm rebuff to the disorganising tendencies displayed in our country, as everywhere else, by the

weak-willed intellectual elements in the Party, who change their slogans like gloves; organisational work is impossible without a struggle against the absurd and reactionary organisation-as-process "theory", which serves to conceal confusion of every description.

The development of the political crisis in Russia will now depend chiefly on the course of the war with Japan. This war has done more than anything else to expose the rottenness of the autocracy; it is doing more than anything else to drain its strength financially and militarily, and to torment and spur on to revolt the long-suffering masses of the people, of whom this criminal and shameful war is demanding such endless sacrifices. Autocratic Russia has already been defeated by constitutional Japan and dragging on the war will only increase and aggravate the defeat. The best part of the Russian navy has been destroyed; the position of Port Arthur is hopeless, and the naval squadron sent to its relief has not the slightest chance of even reaching its destination, let alone of achieving success; the main army under Kuropatkin has lost over 200,000 men and stands exhausted and helpless before the, enemy, who is bound to crush it after the capture of Port Arthur. Military disaster is inevitable, and together with it discontent, unrest, and indignation will inevitably increase tenfold.

We must prepare for that moment with the utmost energy. At that moment, one of the outbreaks which are recurring, now here, now there, with such growing frequency, will develop into a tremendous popular movement. At that moment the proletariat will rise and take its stand at the head of the insurrection to win freedom for the entire people and to secure for the working class the possibility of waging the open and

broad struggle for socialism, a struggle enriched by the whole experience of Europe.

Vperyod, No. 1, January 4, 1905 (December 22, 1904)

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 8, pages 17-28.

The years of revolution (1905–07)

Lenin

Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution June-July 1905

Collected Works, 1962, Moscow, Volume 9, pp. 15-140.

What Does Being A Party of Extreme Opposition In Time of Revolution Mean?

Let us return to the resolution on a provisional government. We have shown that the tactics of the new-Iskraists do not push the revolution forward—which they may have wanted to make possible by their resolution—but back. We have shown that it is precisely these tactics that tie the hands of Social-Democracy in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie and do not safeguard it against being dissolved in bourgeois democracy. Naturally, the false premises of the resolution lead to the false conclusion that: "Therefore, Social-Democracy must not set itself the aim of seizing or sharing power in the provisional government, but must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition." Consider the first half of this conclusion, which is part of a statement of aims. Do the new-Iskraists declare the aim of Social-Democratic activity to be a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism? They do. They are unable correctly to formulate the requisites for a decisive victory and stray into the Osvobozhdeniye formulation, but they do set themselves the aforementioned aim. Further: do they connect a provisional government with insurrection? Yes, they do so plainly, by stating that a provisional government "will emerge from a victorious popular insurrection." Finally, do they set themselves the aim of leading the insurrection? Yes,

they do. Like Mr. Struve, they do not admit that an insurrection is an urgent necessity, but at the same time, unlike Mr. Struve, they say that "Social-Democracy strives to subject it" (the insurrection) "to its influence and leadership and to use it in the interests of the working class."

How nicely this hangs together, does it not? We set ourselves the aim of subjecting the insurrection of both the proletarian and non-proletarian masses to our influence and our leadership, and of using it in our interests. Hence, we set ourselves the aim of leading, in the insurrection, both the proletariat and the revolutionary bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie ("the non-proletarian groups"), i.e., of "sharing" the leadership of the insurrection between the Social-Democracy and the revolutionary bourgeoisie. We set ourselves the aim of securing victory for the insurrection, which is to lead to the establishment of a provisional government ("which will emerge from a victorious popular insurrection"). Therefore. . . therefore we must not set ourselves the aim of seizing power or of sharing it in a provisional revolutionary government!!

Our friends cannot dovetail their arguments. They vacillate between the standpoint of Mr. Struve, who is evading the issue of an insurrection, and the standpoint of revolutionary Social-Democracy, which calls upon us to undertake this urgent task. They vacillate between anarchism, which on principle condemns all participation in a provisional revolutionary government as treachery to the proletariat, and Marxism, which demands such participation on condition that the Social-Democratic Party exercises the leading influence in the insurrection. They have no independent position whatever: neither that of Mr. Struve, who wants to come to terms with

tsarism and is therefore compelled to resort to evasions and subterfuges on the question of insurrection, nor that of the anarchists, who condemn all action "from above" and all participation in a bourgeois revolution. The new-Iskraists confuse a deal with tsarism with a victory over tsarism. They want to take part in a bourgeois revolution. They have gone somewhat beyond Martynov's Two Dictatorships. They even consent to lead the insurrection of the people—in order to renounce that leadership immediately after victory is won (or, perhaps, immediately before the victory?), i.e., in order not to avail themselves of the fruits of victory but to turn all these fruits over entirely to the bourgeoisie. This is what they call "using the insurrection in the interests of the working class...."

There is no need to dwell on this muddle any longer. It will be more useful to examine how this muddle originated in the formulation which reads: "to remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition."

This is one of the familiar propositions of international revolutionary Social-Democracy. It is a perfectly correct proposition. It has become a commonplace for all opponents of revisionism or opportunism in parliamentary countries. It has become generally accepted as the legitimate and necessary rebuff to "parliamentary cretinism," Millerandism, Bernsteinism,[2] and the Italian reformism of the Turati brand. Our good new-Iskraists have learned this excellent proposition by heart and are zealously applying it . . . quite inappropriately. Categories of the parliamentary struggle are introduced into resolutions written for conditions in which no parliament exists. The concept "opposition," which has become the reflection and the expression of a political situation in which no

one seriously speaks of an insurrection, is senselessly applied to a situation in which insurrection has begun and in which all the supporters of the revolution are thinking and talking about leadership in it. The desire to "stick to" old methods, i.e., action only "from below," is expressed with pomp and clamour precisely at a time when the revolution has confronted us with the necessity, in the event of the insurrection being victorious, of acting from above.

No, our new-Iskraists are decidedly out of luck! Even when they formulate a correct Social-Democratic proposition they don't know how to apply it correctly. They failed to take into consideration that in a period in which a revolution has begun, when there is no parliament, when there is civil war, when insurrectionary outbreaks occur, the concepts and terms of parliamentary struggle are changed and transformed into their opposites. They failed to take into consideration the fact that, under the circumstances referred to amendments are moved by means of street demonstrations, interpolations are introduced by means of offensive action by armed citizens, opposition to the government is effected by forcibly overthrowing the government.

Like the well-known hero of our folklore, who repeated good advice just when it was inappropriate, our admirers of Martynov repeat the lessons of peaceful parliamentarism just at a time when, as they themselves state, actual hostilities have commenced. There is nothing more ridiculous than this pompous emphasis of the slogan "extreme opposition" in a resolution which begins by referring to a "decisive victory of the revolution" and to a "popular insurrection"! Try to visualise, gentlemen, what it means to be the "extreme

opposition" in a period of insurrection. Does it mean exposing the government or deposing it? Does it mean voting against the government or defeating its armed forces in open battle? Does it mean refusing the government replenishments for its exchequer or the revolutionary seizure of this exchequer in order to use it for the requirements of the uprising, to arm the workers and peasants and to convoke a constituent assembly? Are you not beginning to understand, gentlemen, that the term "extreme opposition" expresses only negative actions—to expose, to vote against, to refuse? Why is this so? Because this term applies only to the parliamentary struggle and, moreover, to a period when no one makes "decisive victory" the immediate object of the struggle. Are you not beginning to understand that things undergo a cardinal change in this respect from the moment the politically oppressed people launch a determined attack along the whole front in desperate struggle for victory?

The workers ask us: Is it necessary energetically to take up the urgent business of insurrection? What is to be done to make the incipient insurrection victorious? What use should be made of the victory? What program can and should then be applied? The new Iskra-ists, who are making Marxism more profound, answer: We must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition. . . . Well, were we not right in calling these knights past masters in philistinism?

V. I. Lenin

The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party

March 24-28 (April 6-10), 1906
Collected Works, Volume 10, pages 199-276.

What Was the Objective Significance of Our Participation in the Duma Elections?

The Cadets' victories have turned the head of our liberal press. In the course of the election campaign the Cadets succeeded in rallying all, or nearly all, the liberals. Newspapers which hitherto had not been associated with the Cadet Party have in effect become the organs of that party. The liberal press is overjoyed. On all sides we hear cries of exultation and threats addressed to the government. And a very characteristic circumstance is that these cries are constantly intermingled with sometimes malicious and sometimes condescending digs at the Social-Democrats.

Look what a mistake you made by keeping out of the elections! Now you see it, don't you? You will admit that you were mistaken, won't you? Now you appreciate the advice of the wise and far-sighted Plekhanov, don't you?—These and similar utterances may be read in the columns of the liberal press, bubbling over with elation. Comrade Stepanov (in his article "From Afar", in the symposium The Present Situation) has very aptly remarked that Plekhanov's present experience is something like what happened to Bernstein. Just as Bernstein was once carried shoulder-high by the German liberals, and lauded to the skies by all the "progressive" bourgeois newspapers, so today there is not a liberal news paper in Russia, or even a liberal newspaper article (even Slovo, yes, even the

Octobrist Slovo!) that does not embrace and kiss and fondle the wise and far-sighted, reasonable and sober-minded Plekhanov, who had the courage to rise in arms against the boycott.

Let us, then, see what the victories of the Cadets have proved. Whose mistake have they revealed? Whose tactics have they proved to be barren?

Plekhanov, Struve and Co. keep on telling us that the boycott was a mistake. Why the Cadets should think so is quite clear. Their proposal to secure the election to the Duma of one working man from Moscow (see Nasha Zhizn, March 23) shows that the Cadets appreciate the assistance of the workers, that they desire to strike a bargain with the Social-Democrats in order to round off and consolidate their victory, and that they are just as ready to strike such a bargain with the non-party workers as with the Social-Democratic Party. That the Cadets should abhor the boycott is quite natural, for it implies refusal to support them, the Cadets, refusal of the "Left" to strike a bargain with them, the Cadets.

But what does Plekhanov want—and the Mensheviks, or our Russian anti-boycott Social-Democrats, who gravitate towards him (some unwittingly and others wittingly)? Alas, alas! Plekhanov, the boldest of them all, the one who most consistently, most freely and most clearly expounds his views, shows again and again, in the fifth issue of his Dnevnik, that he does not know what he wants. We must take part in the elections, he shouts. What for? To organise revolutionary local self-government, as advocated by the Mensheviks? Or in order to go into the Duma?

Plekhanov twists and turns and wriggles, and resorts to sophistry to avoid answering these plain, blunt and clear questions. After remaining silent for months and months when the Mensheviks, in the columns of Iskra, were already advocating revolutionary local self-government (and when he was unequivocally signifying his sympathy with the Mensheviks' tactics), Plekhanov now suddenly hurls a most contemptuous phrase at this "celebrated revolutionary local self-government" of the Mensheviks. Why and how celebrated, Comrade Plekhanov? Was it not the very Bolsheviks whom Plekhanov now wants to fight, and who long ago proved that this slogan was inadequate, indefinite and half hearted, that helped to make it "celebrated"?

No reply. Plekhanov explains nothing. He pronounces his dictum like an oracle and passes on. But the difference between an oracle and Plekhanov is that an oracle predicts events, whereas Plekhanov pronounces his dictum after the event; he brings in the mustard when the meal is over. When, before the October revolution, before the December uprising, before the revolutionary upsurge, the Mensheviks were talking about "revolutionary local self-government", Plekhanov was silent, although he approved of the Mensheviks' tactics in general; he was silent, as if waiting in bewilderment, not daring to make up his mind. Now, when the revolutionary tide has ebbed, when the "days of freedom" and the days of insurrection are past, when all the various Soviets of workers', soldiers', railwaymen's and other deputies have left the scene (Soviets which the Mensheviks thought were organs of revolutionary local self-government, and which the Bolsheviks regarded as rudimentary, disconnected, spontaneous and therefore impotent organs of revolutionary state power)—in short, when

the question has lost its acuteness, when the meal has been consumed, Plekhanov comes along with the mustard; he displays that wisdom and far-sightedness concerning yesterday that Messrs. Struve and Co. admire so much.

Why Comrade Plekhanov is displeased with revolutionary local self-government remains a secret. Plekhanov now agrees with the Bolsheviks that revolutionary local self-government "confuses" a lot of people (Dnevnik, No. 5); but by all appearances, Plekhanov thinks that this slogan is too radical, whereas the Bolsheviks think it too moderate. Plekhanov thinks that this slogan goes too far, whereas we think that it does not go far enough. What Plekhanov wants is to draw the Mensheviks away from this idea of "revolutionary local self-government" to sober, practical work in the Duma. We, however, want—and not only want,but consciously and distinctly call for—a step forward from the idea of revolutionary local self-government to recognition of the necessity for systematically setting up integral, methodical and dynamic organs of insurrection, organs of revolutionary power. For all practical purposes, Plekhanov shelves the slogan of insurrection (although he dares not say so openly and definitely); it is therefore quite natural that he should also reject the slogan of revolutionary self-government, which without an insurrection, and unconnected with an insurrectionary situation, would be ridiculous and harmful make-believe. Plekhanov is slightly more consistent than his fellow-thinkers, the Mensheviks.

And so, why should we after all take part in the elections, Comrade Plekhanov, and how? Not for the sake of revolutionary local self-government, which only "confuses"

people. To participate in the Duma, then? But here Plekhanov is overcome with timidity. He does not want to reply. But as n+1 comrades in Russia desire to do something definite among the masses of the workers, and not merely "do the reading" of the diaries of an author who "does the writing", and as these n+1 pestering correspondents demand a specific reply, Plekhanov loses his temper. It is difficult to imagine anything more helpless and more curious than his angry statement that it would be pedantic, formalistic, etc., to expect the voters to know what they are voting for, and why. But dear Comrade Plekhanov! Your friends the Cadets, and our workers as well, will simply laugh you out of court if you come before the masses and seriously begin to advocate this magnificent programme: take part in the elections; vote; but don't ask what you are voting for, or why. Vote on the basis of the Duma election law; but don't dare think (that would be pedantic and formalistic) that you are voting for candidates for the Duma.

Why has Comrade Plekhanov, who was once able to write clearly and give specific answers, become so obviously muddled? Because, having wrongly appraised the December uprising, he has formed a totally wrong notion of the present political situation. He finds himself in a position where he does not dare to think out his ideas to their logical conclusion; he is afraid to face realities squarely.

But the unvarnished realities of the "Duma campaign" are now clear to everyone. Facts have now answered the question what the objective significance of the elections was and of participating in them, irrespective of the will, consciousness, speeches and promises of those participating in them. The very reason why Comrade Plekhanov, the most determined of

Mensheviks, dare not declare straight forwardly for participating in the Duma elections is that it is now perfectly clear what this participation means. Participation in the elections means either supporting the Cadets and striking a bargain with them, or playing at elections. The very facts of life have proved this. In No. 5 of his Dnevnik Plekhanov was compelled to admit the correctness of the second half of this argument; he was compelled to admit that the slogan of "revolutionary local self-government" is absurd. In No. 6 of his Dnevnik, Plekhanov will be compelled, unless he refuses to consider the issue on its merits, to admit that the first half is also correct.

Political realities have utterly shattered the Mensheviks' tactics, the tactics they advocated in their "platform" (the hectographed leaflet mentioning the names of Martov and Dan, issued in St. Petersburg at the end of 1905 or beginning of 1906) and in their printed statements (the Bulletin of the Joint Central Committee outlining the tactics of both sides, and Dan's article in a certain pamphlet). These tactics were to participate in the elections, but not to elect members of the Duma. We repeat, not a single more or less prominent Menshevik dared even hint in the press that we should go into the Duma. And it is these "pure" Menshevik tactics that the facts of life have completely shattered. It is hardly possible now to so much as talk seriously about participating in the elections for the sake of "revolutionary local self-government", of withdrawing from the gubernia election meetings, etc. Events have shown very, clearly that such playing at elections, at parliamentarism, can only compromise Social-Democracy, can only result in disgrace and scandal, and nothing else.

If any further confirmation of this is required, it is provided most strikingly by the Moscow Regional Committee of our Party. This is an amalgamated organisation, consisting of the Majority and Minority factions. The tactics it adopted were also "amalgamated", i.e., they were at least half Menshevik tactics, namely, to take part in the election of delegates for the purpose of consolidating Social-Democratic influence in the workers' curia, and then to wreck the elections by refusing to elect the electors. This was an attempt to repeat the tactics adopted towards the Shidlovsky Commission.[5] It was the "first step" on the lines recommended by Comrade Plekhanov: we will take part in the elections, and go into the matter more thoroughly afterwards.

As was to be expected, the Menshevik-Plekhanov tactics of the Moscow Regional Committee ended in a complete fiasco. The delegates were elected, among them Social-Democrats and even members of the organisation. Then came the anti-boycott law.[6] The delegates found themselves on the horns of a dilemma: either to go to prison for agitating in favour of the boycott, or elect the electors. The Regional Committee, like all our Party organisations, conducts its agitation underground, and so it proved unable to cope with the forces it had set in motion. The delegates broke their promise, they tore up their imperative mandates and— elected the electors. Among those elected were also Social— Democrats, and even members of the organisation.

This writer witnessed a very painful scene during the meeting of the Moscow Regional Committee, when that leading Social-Democratic organisation discussed what was to be done after the failure of the (Plekhanov) tactics. The failure of the tactics

was so obvious that not a single Menshevik member of the Committee spoke in favour of the electors participating in the gubernia election meeting, or of revolutionary local self-government, or anything of the sort. On the other hand, it was difficult to decide to impose any penalty on the worker delegates who had acted contrary to their mandates. The Committee could do nothing but wash its hands of the situation, and tacitly confess that it had blundered.

Such was the result of the Plekhanov tactics of voting without carefully considering (without even desiring to think carefully, without desiring to think at all: see Dnevnik, No. 5) what we were to vote for, and why. At the first impact with reality the Menshevik "tactics" were shattered; and this is not surprising, for these "tactics" (participation in the elections, but not in order to elect) consisted entirely of good words and good intentions. The intentions remained intentions and the words, words; but what actually occurred was dictated by the inexorable logic of the objective political situation: either elect in order to support the Cadets, or play at elections. Thus events have fully borne out what I wrote in my article, "The State Duma and Social-Democratic Tactics": "We may declare that our Social-Democratic candidates are completely and absolutely independent, and that we are participating in the elections on the strictest possible Party lines: but the political situation is more potent than any number of declarations. Things will not, and cannot, turn out in keeping with these declarations. Whether we like it or not, if we participate now in the present Duma elections, the result will inevitably be neither Social-Democratic nor workers' party policy" (p. 5).

Let the Mensheviks or the Plekhanovites try to refute this conclusion—not by words but by deeds, by facts. After all, every local organisation of our Party is now autonomous as far as tactics are concerned. How is it that nothing good and practical has come of Menshevik tactics anywhere in Russia? Why has not the Moscow group of the R.S.D.L.P., which is a Menshevik group and not amalgamated with the Bolshevik Committee, drawn up a "Plekhanov" plan of campaign, or one of its own, for the elections that are to take place in Moscow the day after tomorrow, on Sunday, March 26? Not because it did not want to, of course. And, I am sure, not because it did not know how. It was because the objective political situation dictated either boycott, or support for the Cadets. Now among the electors elected for Moscow Gubernia there are Social-Democrats. The results of the elections are quite definite. The gubernia election meeting. will not be held yet awhile. There is still time, Comrade Plekhanov. There is still time, Menshevik comrades! Why don't you advise these electors what to do?[3] Show them, at least for once, that you have tactics for an event and not after it. Should these electors simply walk out of the gubernia election meeting? Or should they walk out and form a revolutionary local self-government? Or should they hand in blank ballot papers? Or, lastly, should they vote for candidates for the Duma, and if so, for whom? For their own Social-Democratic candidates, for the sake of a futile and hopeless hole-and-corner demonstration? And lastly, the main question that you, Menshevik comrades and Comrade Plekhanov, must answer is: What are these electors to do if their votes are to decide whether the Cadets or Octobrists are to be elected? If, for example, the Cadets have A minus 1 electors, the Octobrists have A, and there are two Social-Democratic electors? To

abstain would mean helping the Octobrists to defeat the Cadets! Thus, the only course open is to vote for the Cadets and to beg the latter to leave you a seat in the Duma as a reward for that service.

This is by no means an imaginary conclusion. Nor is it a polemical dig at the Mensheviks. It is a conclusion drawn from reality. The participation of the workers and of the Social-Democrats in the elections leads to this in practice, and only to this. The Cadets rightly took into account what happened in St. Petersburg, where the non-party worker ten ants voted for them to prevent the Octobrists from winning. Taking this into account, they made a forthright offer to the Moscow workers: support us and we will get one of your electors into the Duma. The Cadets appreciated the real significance of Plekhanov's tactics better than Plekhanov himself. By their proposal they anticipated the inevitable political result of the elections. If Social-Democratic worker electors had been in the place of the non-party worker electors, they would have been confronted with the same dilemma: either retire from the elections, and thus help the Black Hundreds; or enter into a direct or indirect agreement or deal, tacit or written, with the Cadets.

0 yes, it is not for nothing that the Cadets are now smothering Plekhanov in their embraces! And the price of these embraces is obvious. Do ut des, as the Latin saying has it: give and take. I embrace you because you, by your advice, are getting me extra votes. True, that may not have been your intention; you have even been ashamed to confess publicly that we have embraced you. You tried by fair means and foul (particularly by foul!) to get away from answering the questions that too importunately, too closely probed into the details of our love match. But it is

not what you want, not what you think, not your good (from the Social-Democratic standpoint) intentions that count. What counts are the results—and those are in our favour.

The Cadets' interpretation of Plekhanov's tactics is correct. That is why they obtain the results they desire: the workers' votes, a deal with the workers, and involvement of the workers in joint responsibility with the Cadets for a Cadet Duma, for the Cadet policy.

Plekhanov's interpretation of the tactics he proposes is wrong. That is why his good intentions merely pave the way to hell. Social-Democratic election agitation among the masses, organisation of the masses, mobilisation of the masses around the Social-Democrats, and so on, and so forth (see the rhetoric of Dan, Plekhanov's fellow-thinker, in his pamphlet), all remain a dead letter. Much as some of us may desire these things, objective conditions are against them. We do not succeed in unfurling the banner of Social-Democracy before the masses (remember the case of the Moscow Regional Committee); it is impossible to transform an underground organisation into a legal one; the helm is wrenched from the powerless steersman who has been flung into the quasi-parliamentary torrent without proper equipment. What we actually get is not a Social-Democratic, not a workers' party policy, but a Cadet labour policy.

But your boycott has proved absolutely useless and impotent, the Cadets shout at us from all sides. The workers who wanted to make a laughing-stock of the Duma and of us Cadets, by their example of a boycott, the workers who elected a dummy to the Duma, were very clearly mistaken! The Duma will not be a dummy, but a Cadet Duma!

Have a heart, gentlemen! You are naive, or pretending to be naïve. If the Duma turns out to be a Cadet Duma, the situation will be different; but the Duma will be a dummy all the same. The workers were guided by a wonder fully sensitive class instinct when, by their matchless demonstration of voting for a dummy, they symbolised the future Duma, warned credulous people, and disclaimed all responsibility for playing at dummies.

You don't understand that? Let us explain it to you.

(…)

Scanty as these figures are, they nevertheless show (and the St. Petersburg elections merely serve to confirm it) that the Russian liberation movement in general, and the Cadet Party in particular, is undergoing a social evolution. The centre of this movement is steadily shifting to the cities. The movement is becoming democratised. The "small fry" among the townspeople are coming to the forefront.

Among the landowners, the Rights predominate (if we assume that the non-party electors are evenly divided between the Lefts and the Rights, an assumption which, if any thing, errs on the side of pessimism rather than of optimism). Among the city voters, the Lefts predominate to a far greater extent.

The landlords have deserted the Cadets for the Union of October Seventeenth and other similar parties. On the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie, or at any rate, the urban petty bourgeoisie (no figures are yet available for the rural petty bourgeoisie, and it will be more difficult to obtain them before the Duma elections), is clearly coming into the political arena, and is clearly turning towards democracy. In the bourgeois

liberation (and Osvobozhdeniye) movement of Zemstvo congresses, the landlords predominated; but the peasant revolts and the October revolution have now thrown back a large section of them definitely to the side of the counter-revolution. The Cadet Party remains a dual party— in it we see both urban petty bourgeoisie and liberal land lords: but the latter, apparently, are already a minority in the party. The petty-bourgeois democrats predominate.

Thus, with a large margin of probability, almost with certainty, we can draw the following two conclusions: first, that the petty bourgeoisie is taking shape politically, and is definitely opposing the government; second, that the Cadet Party is becoming the "Parliamentary" party of the petty-bourgeois democrats.

These two conclusions are not identical, as might appear at first sight. The second is much narrower than the first, for the Cadet Party does not comprise all the petty-bourgeois democratic elements, and moreover, it is only a "parliamentary" (i.e., of course, a quasi-parliamentary, mock-parliamentary) party. As for the significance of the St. Petersburg elections, there is an astonishing agreement among all witnesses; beginning with the pert Rus, which is flirting with radicalism, continuing with Mr. Nabokov, member of the Central Committee of the Cadet Party and candidate for the Duma, and ending with Novoye Vremya. All agree that the election returns are not so much a vote for the Cadets as a vote against the government. The Cadets achieved their victory largely because they were (thanks to Durnovo and Co.) the most extreme Left party in the field. The genuinely Left parties were kept out of the field by violence, arrests, massacres, the election law, and so forth. By the very force of

circumstances, by the logic of the election struggle, all the discontented, irritated, angry and vaguely revolutionary elements were compelled to rally around the Cadets. The combination of all the progressive electors with the Cadets that we made in the table given above is a reflection of what actually took place. Virtually there were two big forces contending: one for the government (the counter-revolutionary landlords, the capitalists, and the dehumanised officials), and the other against the government (the liberal landlords, the petty bourgeoisie, and all the vaguely revolutionary-democratic elements). That elements to the left of the Cadets voted for the latter is a fact that stands out beyond doubt from the general picture of the St. Peters burg elections[3] ; it is confirmed by the direct evidence of numerous witnesses (the fact that the "common people" voted for "freedom", and so on, and so forth), and it is borne out indirectly by the swing to the Cadet camp of the whole of the democratic press that stands slightly to the left of the Cadet press. Thus, while the core of the present Cadet Party consists of people who are certainly good for nothing better than toy-parliament oratory, this cannot be said about the bulk of the petty-bourgeois voters who voted for the Cadets. "Virtually, our experience is the same as that of the Social-Democrats during elections in Germany," said a Cadet to the reporter of the Cadet (or semi-Cadet) Nasha Zhizn (No. 401, March 23). "Many people vote for them because they are the party most strongly opposed to the government."

This is very true, but a tiny little thing must be added: the German Social-Democratic Party, being a militant and advanced socialist party in the fullest sense of the word, groups around itself many relatively backward elements. But the Russian Cadets, who in the fullest sense of the word are a

backward and not a militant, democratic party, have carried with them many advanced and potentially militant democratic elements because the genuinely democratic parties have been forcibly removed from the battlefield. In other words, the German Social-Democratic Party carries with it those who trail behind it; whereas the Russian Cadets themselves trail behind the democratic revolution and can carry with them many advanced people only when most of those who march in front of them are inmates of prisons or are lying in their graves. We say this in passing lest our Cadets get above themselves on account of this comparison with the German Social-Democrats.

Owing to the elimination of the advanced democratic elements from the scene of this toy-parliament struggle, and so long as they are kept out of it, the Cadets, naturally, have a chance of gaining control of the toy parliament that goes by the name of the Russian State Duma. If we take the above-quoted figures, bear in mind the St. Petersburg and later victories of the Cadets, roughly estimate the enormous predominance of rural electors over urban, and add the peasant electors to the landowner electors, we shall have to admit that, on the whole, it is quite possible, and even probable, that the Duma will be a Cadet Duma.

What is the Party of People's Freedom?

What role, then, can and must a Cadet Duma play? To answer this question, we must first of all examine in greater detail the character of the Cadet Party itself.

We have already noted the main feature of the class structure of this party. Unconnected with any one particular class in bourgeois society, but absolutely bourgeois in composition,

character and ideals, this party is wavering between the democratic petty bourgeoisie and the counter revolutionary elements of the big bourgeoisie. The social basis of this party consists, first, of the masses of the towns people, the very townspeople who eagerly built barricades in Moscow in the famous December days; secondly, it consists of the liberal landlords who want to come to a deal with the autocracy, through the good offices of pro-liberal officials, for an "inoffensive" division of power between the people and those who by the grace of God oppress the people. This extremely broad, indefinite and inherently contradictory class basis (which, as has been noted above, is clearly discernible in the figures regarding the Cadet electors) is reflected with remarkable vividness in the Cadets' programme and tactics. Their programme is entirely bourgeois; the Cadets simply cannot conceive of a social system other than capitalism, beyond which even their boldest suggestions do not go. In politics, their programme combines democracy, "people's freedom", with counter-revolution, with the freedom of the autocracy to oppress the people; and it combines them with particularly petty-bourgeois and professorial-pedantic scrupulousness. The Cadet's ideal is that power in the state should be divided into approximately three parts. One part goes to the autocracy. The monarchy remains. The monarch retains equal power with the popular representative body, which is to "agree" with him on the laws to be passed, and submit its bills to him for approval. The second part goes to the landlords and the big capitalists. They get the Upper Chamber, from which the "common people" are to be barred by a two-stage electoral system and a residential qualification. Lastly, the third part goes to the people, who get a Lower Chamber elected

on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. Why fight, why this internecine strife? wails Judas Cadet, lifting up his eyes and reproachfully glancing, now towards the revolutionary people, now towards the counter-revolutionary government. Brothers! Love one another! Let the wolves have their fill without any harm to the sheep, let the monarchy with its Upper Chamber be inviolate and "people's freedom" assured.

The hypocrisy underlying these Cadet principles is most glaring, and the fallacies of the "scientific" (professorially-scientific) arguments with which they are defended are amazing. It would be a great mistake, of course, to attribute this hypocrisy and these fallacies to the personal qualities of the Cadet leaders, or of individual Cadets. Such a vulgar explanation, which our opponents often attribute to us, is repugnant to Marxism. Undoubtedly, there are many most sincere Cadets who really believe that their party stands for "people's freedom". But the dual and vacillating class basis of their party inevitably engenders their double faced policy, their fallacies, and their hypocrisy.

These amiable features stand out even more clearly, perhaps, in the Cadets' tactics than in their programme. Polyarnaya Zvezda,[3] in which Mr. Struve has so sedulously and successfully merged Cadetism with Novoye Vremya-ism, has given us an excellent, magnificent and inimitable example of Cadet tactics. At the moment when the firing in Moscow was subsiding, and when the military and police dictatorship was indulging in its savage orgies, when repressions and mass torture were raging all over Russia, Polyarnaya Zvezda protested against the use of force by the Lefts, and against the

strike committees organised by the revolutionary parties. The Cadet professors who are trading in their science for the benefit of the Dubasovs went to the length (like Mr. Kiesewetter, member of the Central Committee of the Cadet Party and candidate for the Duma) of translating the word "dictatorship" by the words "reinforced security"! These "men of science" even distorted their high-school Latin in order to discredit the revolutionary struggle. Please note once and for all, Messrs. Kiesewetter, Struve, Izgoyev and Co., that dictatorship means unlimited power based on force, and not on law. In civil war, any victorious power can only be a dictatorship. The point is, however, that there is the dictatorship of a minority over the majority, the dictatorship of a handful of police officials over the people; and there is the dictatorship of the overwhelming majority of the people over a handful of tyrants, robbers and usurpers of people's power. By their vulgar distortion of the scientific concept "dictatorship", by their out cries against the violence of the Left at a time when the Right are resorting to the most lawless and outrageous violence, the Cadet gentlemen have given striking evidence of the position the "compromisers" take in the intense revolutionary struggle. When the struggle flares up, the "compromiser" cravenly runs for cover. When the revolutionary people are victorious (October 17), the "compromiser" creeps out of his hiding-place, boastfully preens himself, shouting and raving until he is hoarse: "That was a 'glorious' political strike!" But when victory goes to the counter-revolution, the compromiser begins to heap hypocritical admonitions and edifying counsel on the vanquished. The successful strike was "glorious". The defeated strikes were criminal, mad, senseless, and anarchistic. The defeated insurrection was folly, a riot of surging elements,

barbarity and stupidity. In short, his political conscience and political wisdom prompt the "compromiser" to cringe before the side that for the moment is strongest, to get in the way of the combatants, hindering first one side and then the other, to tone down the struggle and to blunt the revolutionary consciousness of the people who are waging a desperate struggle for freedom.

The peasants are fighting against landlordism, and this struggle is now reaching its climax. It has become so acute that the issue is put squarely: the landlords are demanding machine-guns in reply to the slightest attempt of the peas ants to seize the land that the nobles have been grabbing for centuries. The peasants want to take all the land. If they attempt it, Polyarnaya Zvezda, with an unctuous excuse, will send the Kaufmans into the field to prove that the land lords haven't very much land: that, strictly speaking, it is not the land that is the cause of the trouble, and that everything can be settled peacefully.

The resolution on tactics adopted by the last Cadet congress very well sums up the Cadets' political chicanery. After the December uprising, when it had become perfectly obvious to everybody that the peaceful strike was obsolete, that it had spent itself and become useless as an in dependent weapon in the struggle, the Cadet congress came along with a resolution (proposed, I think, by Mr. Vinaver) which recognised the peaceful political strike as a weapon in the struggle!

This is magnificent, matchless, Cadet gentlemen. You have assimilated the spirit and meaning of bourgeois political chicanery with inimitable facility. The bourgeoisie must seek the support of the people; without it, it will never achieve power, and has never done so. But at the same time, it must

restrain the revolutionary onslaught of the people to prevent the workers and peasants from winning— God forbid— complete and consistent democracy, genuine, and not monarchist and "two-Chamber", freedom for the people. That is why it must throw a spoke in the wheel of the revolution every time it is winning. And for this purpose every means, every device, must be brought into play—from the "scientific" distortion of Latin by "professors" to discredit the very idea of the people achieving a decisive victory, to, say, recognising only such weapons in the revolutionary struggle as are already obsolete at the time when you recognise them! This is both harmless and advantageous. Harmless, because blunted weapons obviously cannot bring the people victory, will not put the proletariat and the peasantry in power; at best, they will shake the autocracy a little and help the Cadets to bargain for an extra bit of "rights" for the bourgeoisie. It is advantageous because on the surface it creates the impression that the Cadets are "revolutionary", that they sympathise with the people's struggle, and this wins them the support of large numbers who sincerely and earnestly want the revolution to win.

The very essence of the economic condition of the petty bourgeoisie, wavering between capital and labour, inevitably engenders the political instability and duplicity of the Cadet Party, leads to the latter's notorious "arrangement" theory ("the people have rights, but it is the prerogative of the monarch to sanction these rights") and converts it into a party of constitutional illusions. The ideologist of the petty, bourgeoisie cannot grasp the "essence of the constitution". The petty bourgeois is always inclined to take a scrap of paper for the essence of the thing. He is ill-fitted for independent organisation—that is, independent of the militant class—for the

direct revolutionary struggle. Being the most far-removed from the most acute economic struggle of our epoch, he prefers, in politics as well, to yield first place to other classes when it comes to really winning a constitution, to actually achieving a genuine constitution. Let the proletariat fight for the constitutional ground, and on this constitutional ground, so long as it holds, even on the corpses of workers killed during the insurrection, let the toy-business mannikins play at parliamentarism— such is the immanent tendency of the bourgeoisie. And the Cadet Party, this refined, ennobled, sublimated, perfumed, idealised, and sweetened incarnation of general bourgeois aspirations, is working on these lines with wonderful consistency.

You call yourselves the party of people's freedom? Don't give us that! You are a party of philistine betrayers of people's freedom, a party of philistine illusions about people's freedom. You are a party of freedom—in that you want to subject freedom to a monarch and a landlord Upper Chamber. You are a party of the people—in that you dread the victory of the people, that is, the complete victory of a peasant revolt, of the workers' struggle for the cause of labour. You are a party of the struggle—in that every time a real, direct, immediate revolutionary struggle against the autocracy flares up, you take refuge behind unctuous, professorial excuses. You are a party of words, not of deeds; a party of promises, not of fulfilment; a party of constitutional illusions, not a party for an earnest struggle for a real (not merely a paper) constitution.

When a lull sets in after a desperate battle; when up above "the sated beast, the victor, lies a-weary",[1] and down below the people are "sharpening their swords" and gathering fresh strength; when slowly the ferment is beginning to bubble and

seethe among the masses again, when a new political crisis and a new great battle are only in the making—then the party of philistine illusions about people's freedom reaches the culminating point of its development and exults over its victories. The sated beast feels too languid to pounce once more upon the liberal talkers (there's no hurry; it can wait!); for the champions of the working class and the peasantry, the time has not yet come for another upheaval. This is just the golden opportunity; this is the time to gather the votes of all the discontented (and who is contented nowadays?); this is the time for our Cadets to sing full-throated, like any nightingale.

The Cadets are the worms in the grave of the revolution. The revolution lies buried. It is being eaten by worms. But revolution has the power of speedy resurrection and of blossoming forth again on well-prepared soil. The soil has been wonderfully, magnificently prepared by the October days of freedom and by the December uprising; but we would not for a moment deny that the worms, too, are doing useful work while the revolution lies buried. Why, these fat worms manure the soil so well....

Mr. Struve once exclaimed in Polyarnaya Zvezda: "The peasant in the Duma will be a Cadet!" Very likely. The bulk of the peasants are, of course, in favour of freedom for the people. They will hear these fine, lofty words, they will see the police officials, face-smashing policemen, and feudal-minded landlords dressed up in all sorts of "Octobrist" costumes: and, of course, they will be on the side of freedom for the people, they will be attracted by the beautifully coloured labels, they will not see through this philistine deception all at once. They will become Cadets— and remain Cadets until the course of

events shows them that the people's freedom has still to be won, that the real fight for freedom for the people has still to be fought outside the Duma. And then—then the peasants as well as the bulk of the town petty bourgeoisie will split: a small but economically powerful kulak minority may this time definitely side with the counter-revolution, another section will go over to the side of "compromise", of "reconciliation", of an amicable deal with the monarchy and the landlords; and a third section will side with the revolution.

In December, during the great struggle, the townspeople built barricades. In March, when the insurrection is sup pressed, they protest against the government by voting for the Cadets. When their present constitutional illusions are dispelled, they will leave the Cadets and go over to the revolution again. How many of the townspeople abandon Cadet word-spinning for revolutionary struggle, how many of the peasantry join them, how vigorously, how well-organised, how successfully the proletariat goes forward in the next onslaught, will determine the outcome of the revolution.

The Cadet Party is an ephemeral, lifeless party. This may sound paradoxical at a time when the Cadets are achieving brilliant election victories, and will probably achieve still more brilliant "parliamentary" victories in the Duma. But Marxism teaches us to examine all phenomena in their process of development, and not to be content merely with superficial descriptions; not to believe in pretty labels, but to investigate the economic, class basis of parties; to study the objective political situations which will determine the significance and outcome of their political activities. Apply this method to the Cadets, and you will see that our assertion is correct. The Cadets are not a party, but a

symptom. They are not a political force, but foam resulting from the collision of more or less equally balanced contending forces. They do in very truth combine in themselves the swan, crab and pike of the fable—the garrulous, boastful, smug, narrow-minded, craven bourgeois intellectual, the counter-revolutionary landlord who wants to ransom himself from revolution at a reasonable price, and lastly the hard, shrewd, cheese-paring and tight-fisted petty bourgeois. This party neither desires, nor is it able, to rule at all firmly in bourgeois society; it neither desires, nor is it able, to lead the bourgeois-democratic revolution along anything like a definite path. The Cadets have no desire to rule; they prefer to "belong" under a monarchy and an Upper Chamber. They cannot rule, because the real masters of bourgeois society, the Shipovs and Guchkovs, the representatives of big capital and big property, hold aloof from this party. The Cadets are a party of dreamers about a nice white, clean, orderly, "ideal" bourgeois society. The Guchkovs and Shipovs are the party of real, genuine, grimy capital in modern bourgeois society. The Cadets cannot lead the revolution forward, because they lack the backing of a united and really revolutionary class. They dread the revolution. They rally everybody, the whole "people", only on the basis of constitutional illusions and unite them only with a negative bond: hatred for the sated beast, for the autocratic government, in opposition to which, on the present "legal" basis, the Cadets are more to the left than anybody else.

The historical role of the Cadets is a transient, fleeting one. They will fall together with the inevitable and speedy fall of constitutional illusions; they will fall like the French Social-Democrats of the late 1840s, who very much resembled our Cadets, and were also petty-bourgeois. The Cadets will fall,

after preparing the soil—either for a prolonged triumph of the Shipovs and Guchkovs, for a prolonged burial of the revolution, for "serious" bourgeois constitutionalism, or for the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The Role and Significance of a Cadet Duma

And so the State Duma will be a Cadet Duma, say the liberal newspapers. We have already said that this is quite probable. We can only add that even if, despite their present victories, the Cadets prove to be a minority in the Duma, it is not likely to affect very materially the course of the political crisis that is again maturing in Russia. The elements of this revolutionary crisis are too deep-rooted to be seriously affected by the composition of the Duma. The attitude of the broad masses of the people towards the government is quite clear. The attitude of the government towards the pressing needs of the whole of social development is more than clear. Naturally, in these circumstances, the revolution will advance. The predominance of the Black Hundreds in the First Duma can have only one probable delaying effect upon certain aspects of the political development of Russia: the collapse of the Cadet Party and of its prestige among the people will be delayed if the Cadets are now in the minority. At the present time it would be very convenient for them to be in a minority and to remain in opposition. The public would attribute the predominance of the Black Hundreds to the government's repressive measures during the elections. The opposition speeches of the Cadets, who realise how "harmless" their opposition is, would be particularly fervid. Their prestige among the broad masses of the politically uneducated population might rise, in

circumstances when their "words" sounded even louder than at present, while their "deeds" remained even more vague because of their being outvoted by the Octobrists. Even then, the growth of discontent with the government and preparations for a new revolutionary upsurge would continue; but the exposure of Cadet futility might be somewhat delayed.

Let us now make another assumption, a more probable one, if we are to believe the present assertions of the Cadet newspapers. Let us assume that the Cadets will have a majority in the Duma, consisting, of course, of the same combination of Cadets and various non-party, "petty-party" and other liberals that we now see in the elections. What will the role and significance of a Cadet Duma be then?

The Cadets themselves give a very specific answer to this question. Their statements, promises and high-sounding phrases breathe firmness and determination. And it is extremely important that we members of the workers' party should carefully collect all these statements, keep them well in mind, spread them among the people and ensure by all means that these lessons in politics (which the Cadets are giving the people) are not wasted, that the workers and peasants know exactly what the Cadets are promising and how they carry out their promises.

In this pamphlet—which contains no more than the cursory comments of a wandering Social-Democratic publicist who by the grace of Durnovo and Co. has had to retire from journalistic work—in this pamphlet, we cannot hope to collect all, or even all the most important, statements and promises of the Cadets who are going into the Duma. We can only note one or two things in the literature that we happen to have at our disposal.

Here is the newspaper Narodnaya Svoboda, which started publication in December and was soon suppressed by the government. This was the avowed, official organ of the Cadet Party. It was edited by such pillars of this party as Messrs. Milyukov and Hessen. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the whole Cadet Party is responsible for its contents.

In its issue of December 20, Narodnaya Svoboda sets about convincing its readers that it is necessary to go into the Duma. What arguments does the Cadet organ advance in support of this? Narodnaya Svoboda does not attempt to deny that the political task that immediately confronts Russia is to convene a constituent assembly. The Cadet organ takes this for granted. The only question is, you see, who is to convene the constituent assembly? This question may be answered in three ways: (1) the present, i.e., in practice the autocratic, government; (2) a provisional revolutionary government; and (3) the State Duma as "an authority competing with authority". The Cadets reject the first two outcomes—they place no hopes in the autocratic government, and have no faith in the success of an insurrection. They accept the third outcome. They urge that it is necessary to go into the Duma because this is the best, surest, and so on and so forth, method of convening a national constituent assembly.

Mark this conclusion well, gentlemen! The Cadet Party, the party of "people's freedom", has promised the people to use the "authority competing with authority", to use its predominance in the State Duma (if the people help it to achieve this predominance), to convene a national constituent assembly.

This is a historical fact. It is an important pledge. It will be the first test of how the party of "people's freedom" (in inverted

commas) will serve people's freedom (with out inverted commas).

In the current issues of the Cadet Party newspapers (and. we repeat, nearly all the liberal newspapers, including Rus, Nasha Zhizn, etc., have virtually gone over to that party), you will no longer find this promise. You may find references to the "constituting functions" of the Duma; but nothing is said now about the Duma convening a national constituent assembly. As the time to back promises with deeds draws nearer, they already take a step backwards, they prepare a loophole.

Perhaps the whole trouble is that the present ferocious laws are preventing you from speaking openly about a constituent assembly? Is that so, gentlemen? But in the Duma, where your deputies will by law enjoy freedom of speech, you will again give full voice to your demand for the convocation—what am I saying?—you will convene the national constituent assembly, will you not?

Let us wait and see. And we shall not forget the Cadets' promise to convene a national constituent assembly through the medium of the Duma. The Cadet newspapers now bristle with statements to the effect that they, the Cadets, will be "the government", that they will be "in power", and so on, and so forth. Good luck, gentlemen! The sooner you have a majority in the Duma, the sooner will your promissory notes be presented to you for payment. The Cadet newspaper Rus, welcoming the victory of the party of "people's freedom" in St. Petersburg, publishes in its issue of March 22 an impassioned article entitled "With the People or Against It?" It says nothing specifically about the Duma convening a national constituent

assembly. But despite this step back from the Cadets' promises, it paints a fairly rosy picture of the Cadets' prospects:

"The principal mission of the Duma that is about to assemble, and of the Party of People's Freedom in it, is to be the whips and scorpions of the people's anger.

"After expelling and impeaching the criminal members of the government, it will have to deal only with urgent measures and then convene a real Duma—on a broader basis, the representative of the whole people [i.e., the constituent assembly?].

"This is the indubitable function of the Duma, i.e., the function that the people itself now imposes on it."

So. Expel the government. Impeach the government. Convene a real Duma.

Rus writes well. The Cadets speak well; they speak wonderfully well. It is only a pity that their newspapers are suppressed for these fine words....

Gentlemen, let us remember this new promise you have made on the day following the St. Petersburg elections; let us remember it very well. The Cadets are going into the Duma to expel the government, to impeach the government, to convene a real Duma.

Let us now pass from the Cadets' promises regarding the Duma to the government's "views" about the Cadet Duma. Of course, nobody is allowed to know exactly what these "views" are; but those same optimistic Cadet newspapers provide us with some material from which to appraise them. For example, the reports published about the proposed loan in France[4] appear to be

more and more confident that this matter is settled, and that the loan will be floated before the Duma is convened. Thus, the government will, of course, be still less dependent on the Duma.

Then, as regards the prospects of the Witte-Durnovo Ministry, the same Rus (or Molva), in the article, quoted above, calls upon the government to "go with the people, i. e., with the Duma". As you see, "expelling the criminal members of the government" merely means making certain changes in its composition. The nature of these changes can be seen from the following statement in this newspaper:

"Today, a Ministry formed by a man of repute like D. N. Shipov would be most advantageous even for the reaction. It alone could avert a final collision between the government and society in the Duma." But we are assuming that "the worst happens", observes the newspaper, anticipating the formation of a purely bureaucratic Ministry. "Here no proof is required," says Molva. "It is obvious to everybody that if the government does not intend to rob the Duma of all significance, it must, it is in duty bound to, dismiss Durnovo, Witte and Akimov forthwith. And it is equally clear that if this does not happen, if this is not done, it will show that the gendarme policy of 'curbing and preventing' is to be applied both to the representatives of the people and to the State Duma. And for this purpose, of course, the most suitable men are those whose arms are already steeped to the elbows in the blood of the people. It is quite obvious that if Mr. Durnovo remains in office with the Duma in opposition, it can only be for the purpose of dispersing the Duma. It has no other purpose, nor can it have. Everybody under stands this. It is understood on the stock exchange, and it is understood abroad." "To resist" the Duma

means "sending the ship of state out into such a raging storm", etc., etc.

Lastly, to complete the picture, we will quote the following report published in the Cadet Nasha Zhizn of March 21 about the "bureaucratic spheres", concerning which this newspaper tries to give its readers as much information as possible.

"The increasing successes of the Cadet Party have attracted the attention of the higher spheres. At first they were somewhat alarmed by these successes, hut now they are treating them quite calmly. Last Sunday a private conference of the highest representatives of the government was held to discuss this question, where this attitude became apparent, and, moreover, tactics, so to speak, were decided on. Incidentally, some very characteristic observations were made. Some held that a Cadet victory is positively to the government's advantage, for, if the Bight elements were to win in the Duma elections, it would only play into the hands of the extreme groups, who would use the composition of the Duma as a pretext for conducting propaganda against it, and would argue that it was deliberately picked to ensure a reactionary majority. The more representatives of the Cadet Party there are in the Duma, the more the bulk of the nation will respect it. As regards the tactics to be adopted towards the Duma, the majority held that there are no grounds for apprehending any 'surprises' in view of 'the restrictions that are imposed on the Duma', as one of those present candidly remarked. In view of this, the majority believed that the future members of the Duma should not be hindered, 'even if they do criticise individual members of the government'. A great many expect this, and the general opinion of the bureaucrats on this point can be summed up as follows:

'Let them talk'; 'there will be demands for proceedings to be taken; perhaps proceedings will he started, and so forth, and then they will get tired of it. What becomes of these cases, we shall see; meanwhile the members will have to concern themselves with questions affecting the country—and then everything will slip into its normal course. Even if the members take it into their heads to express no confidence in the government, that will not be serious either; after all, the Ministers are not appointed by the Duma'. It is reported that these arguments had a soothing effect even upon Durnovo and Witte, who were at first alarmed by the successes of the Cadet Party."

Thus you have the opinions, views and intentions of the persons directly interested and participating in these "affairs". On the one hand, there are prospects of a struggle. The Cadets promise to expel the government and convene a new Duma. If the government attempts to dissolve the Duma, there will be "a raging storm". The question therefore is: who will expel, or who will dissolve? On the other hand, there is the prospect of a deal. The Cadets think that a Shipov Minis try could avert a collision between the government and society. The government thinks: let them talk; let them even take one or two to court; after all, the Ministers are not appointed by the Duma. We have deliberately quoted only the opinions of those who are involved in the deal, and have quoted them entirely in their own words. We have add ed nothing. To have added anything would have weakened the impression created by the evidence of the witnesses. And their evidence gives us a vivid picture of what a Cadet Duma will be like.

Either a struggle, and in that case it will not be the Duma that will fight, but the revolutionary people. The Duma hopes to reap the fruits of victory. Or a deal, and then in any case it will be the people, i.e., the proletariat and the peasantry, who will be deceived. As regards the terms of the deal, men who are really business-like say nothing until the time is ripe. Only hot-headed "radicals" sometimes blurt it out. Let us say, for example, the Ministry of bureaucrats is replaced by a Ministry formed by that "honest bourgeois", Shipov; it will then be possible to strike a bargain that will be fair to both sides.... Then we shall come very, very near to achieving the Cadet ideal: first place for the monarchy; second place for a landlord and factory-owner Upper Chamber, with a Shipov Ministry that will harmonise with it, and third place for a "popular" Duma.

It goes without saying that this alternative, like every assumption concerning the social and political future, indicates only the main and fundamental lines of development. In real life, we often see mixed solutions; lines intercross—struggles alternate with deals, and struggles supplement the deals. This is exactly how Mr. Milyukov, in Rech of Friday, March 24, argues about the prospects that are already arising out of the Cadet victory, which is now evident. It is quite wrong, he says, to regard us as, and to declare that we are, revolutionaries. It all depends upon circumstances, gentlemen, says our "charming dialectician" for the edification of the powers that be; even Shipov was a "revolutionary" up to October 17. If you agree to a deal with us in a peaceful and friendly way, we shall agree to reforms and not revolution. If you do not agree, we shall probably have to exert some pressure from below upon you, release a little bit of revolution to frighten you, to weaken you by a blow struck by the revolutionary people, and then you will

be more accommodating, and before you know where you are, we shall have got a better bargain.

Thus, the elements of the problem are as follows. A government is in power which the majority of the bourgeoisie avowedly do not trust, and which the workers and class-conscious peasants hate. The government has a tremendous force at its command. Its one weak spot is finance; and even that is not certain. It may still be able to raise a loan before the Duma assembles. Against the government, according to our assumption, stands the Cadet Duma. What does it want? Its bargaining price we know: the Cadet programme, i.e., a monarchy and an Upper Chamber, with a democratic Lower Chamber. What is its rock-bottom price? No one knows. Well, something in the nature of a Shipov Ministry, perhaps. True, Shipov is opposed to direct suffrage; but after all, he is an honest man — we could probably come to terms with him, somehow. What are the Cadet Duma's methods of fighting? To refuse to vote money. An unreliable method, first, because the government may probably get the money without the Duma; and secondly, because according to the law, the Duma's right of control over finance is very, very slight. The other method is: "They will shoot." You remember how Katkov depicted the attitude of the liberals towards the government: yield, or "they" will shoot. But in Katkov's time "they" were a handful of heroes who were unable to do anything except assassinate individuals. Today, "they" are. the whole mass of the proletariat, which in October showed that it was capable of amazingly concerted country-wide action, and in December showed that it was capable of waging a stubborn armed struggle. And now "they" also include the peasant masses, who have shown that they are capable of waging a revolutionary struggle, if in an unco-ordinated, unconscious

and disunited fashion; but among them there are increasing numbers of those who, given appropriate conditions, given the slightest breath of free air (it is so difficult to escape the draught nowadays!), will be capable of leading millions. 'They" are not only capable of assassinating Cabinet Ministers; "they" can completely sweep away the monarchy, and all traces of an Upper Chamber, and landlordism, and even the standing army. "They" are not only capable of doing this, "they" will inevitably do it, if the severity of the military dictatorship.— the last refuge of the old order, last not in the light of theoretical calculations, but of acquired practical experience— is relaxed.

Such are the elements of the problem. How it will be solved cannot be predicted with absolute certainty. There can be no doubt about how we Social-Democrats want to solve it, and how all class-conscious workers and class-conscious peasants will solve it: by striving for the complete victory of the peasant uprising and for the winning of a really democratic republic. What will Cadet tactics be in these circumstances; what should they be, not according to what individuals want and think, but in virtue of the objective conditions of existence of a petty bourgeoisie in capitalist society fighting for its emancipation?

The Cadets' tactics will certainly and inevitably reduce themselves to manoeuvring between the autocracy and the victory of the revolutionary people, and to preventing either of the opponents from finally and completely crushing the other. If the autocracy succeeds in finally and completely crushing the revolution, the Cadets will become powerless, for their strength is derived from the strength of the revolution. If the revolutionary people, i.e., the proletariat, and the peasantry rising in revolt against the whole system of landlordism, crush

the autocracy finally and completely, and hence, sweep away the monarchy with all its frills and trimmings, the Cadets will also be powerless, for all the virile elements will desert them either for the revolution or for the counter-revolution; and the party will be left with a couple of Kiesewetters sighing about the "dictatorship", and digging Latin dictionaries for the appropriate Latin terms. Briefly, the Cadets' tactics may be formulated as follows: to ensure the support of the revolutionary people for the Cadet Party. By "support" they evidently mean such action by the revolutionary people as will, first, be entirely subordinated to the interests of the Cadet Party and carried out according to its instructions, etc.; and secondly, not be too resolute and aggressive, and above all, not be too drastic. The revolutionary people must not be independent, that is the first point; and it must not achieve final victory, it must not crush its enemy, that is point two. These are the tactics that, on the whole, will inevitably be pursued by the entire Cadet Party and by any Cadet Duma. And, of course, these tactics will be backed, defended and justified with the aid of the rich ideological stock-in-trade of "scientific" investigations, "philosophical" obscurities, political (or politicians') banalities, "literary-critical" squealing (d la Berdayev), etc., etc.

On the other hand, the revolutionary Social-Democrats cannot at the present time define their tactics by the pro position: support of the Cadet Party and a Cadet Duma. Such tactics would be wrong and utterly useless.

The retort to us will be, of course: What? Do you repudiate what is recognised in your programme and by all international Social-Democracy? Do you deny that the Social-Democratic proletariat must support the revolutionary and oppositionist

bourgeois democrats? Why, that is anarchism, utopianism, rebelliousness, senseless revolutionism.

But wait a minute, gentlemen. Permit us first of all to remind you that this is not a general, or abstract, question of whether to support bourgeois democrats in general, but a concrete question of whether to support precisely the Cadet Party and precisely a Cadet Duma. We are not repudiating a general proposition; we are demanding a special analysis of the conditions for applying these general principles in a concrete case. Truth is never abstract, it is always concrete. This is forgotten by Plekhanov, for example, who, not for the first time, is proposing, and laying special emphasis on the tactics: "Reaction is trying to isolate us. We must try to isolate reaction." This proposition is correct, but it is ridiculously general: it applies equally to Russia of 1870, to Russia of 1906, to Russia generally, and to Africa, America, China and India. It tells us nothing and helps us in no way; for the whole problem is to define what reaction is, whom we must unite with, and how (or if not unite, then co-ordinate our activities with), in order to isolate reaction. Plekhanov is afraid to specify; but actually, in practice, his tactics, as we have already shown, amount to election agreements between the Social-Democrats and the Constitutional-Democrats, to Social-Democrats supporting the Cadets.

The Cadets are opposed to reaction? I turn again to Molva, No. 18 of March 22, which I have already quoted. The Cadets want to expel the government. That is splendid; that is opposition to reaction. The Cadets want to make peace with the autocratic government on the basis of a Shipov Ministry.[2] That's bad. That's one of the worst forms of reaction. You see, gentlemen:

abstract propositions, bald phrases about reaction, do not carry you a single step forward.

The Cadets are bourgeois democrats? That is true. But then the peasant masses, who are out for the confiscation of all the landed estates—which the Cadets don't want—are also bourgeois democrats. Both the forms and the content of the political activities of these two sections of bourgeois democrats are different. Which of them is it more important for us to support at the present time? Can we, generally speaking, in the period of democratic revolution, support the former? Will it not mean betraying the latter? Or perhaps you will deny that Cadets who in politics are ready to resign themselves to a Shipov, in the agrarian question are capable of resigning themselves to a Kaufman? You see, gentlemen: abstract propositions, bald phrases about bourgeois democracy, do not carry you a single step forward.

But the Cadets are a united, strong and virile parliamentary party!

That is not true. The Cadets are neither a united, nor a strong, nor a virile, nor a parliamentary party. They are not united, for many of the people who voted for them are capable of fighting to the very end and not merely of striking a bargain. They are not united, for their social basis is inherently contradictory: it ranges from the democratic petty bourgeoisie to the counter-revolutionary landlords. They are not strong, for as a party they refuse to, and cannot, take part in the intense and open civil war that flared up in Russia at the end of 1905, and very likely will flare up again with added force in the near future. They are not a virile party, for even if their ideal is achieved, not they but the "solid" bourgeois, the Shipovs and Guchkovs, will be the

power in the society formed in conformity with this ideal. They are not a parliamentary party, for we have no parliament. We have no Constitution; we have only a constitutional autocracy, only constitutional illusions, which are particularly harmful in a period of intense civil war, and which the Cadets are spreading with particular zeal.

This brings us to the pivot of the question. The specific feature of the present state of the Russian revolution is that objective conditions are pushing into the forefront a resolute, extra-parliamentary struggle for parliamentarism; and for that reason there can be nothing more harmful and dangerous at such a time than constitutional illusions and playing at parliamentarism. At such a time the parties of "parliamentary" opposition may be more dangerous and harmful than completely and avowedly reactionary parties: this proposition may sound paradoxical only to those who are totally incapable of thinking dialectically. Indeed, if the demand for parliamentarism has fully matured among the widest masses of the people, if it is based on the whole of the age-long social and economic evolution of the country, and if political evolution has brought us to the point of achieving it, what can be more dangerous and harmful than a fictitious realisation of this demand? Avowed anti-parliamentarism is harmless. Its doom is sealed. It is dead. The attempts to resurrect it are only having the very good effect of revolutionising the more backward strata of the population. A "constitutional autocracy", the creation and spreading of constitutional illusions, are becoming the only possible means of saving the autocracy. This is the only correct and wise policy the autocracy can pursue.

And I assert that at the present time the Cadets are doing more to help the autocracy to pursue this wise policy than Moskovskiye Vedomosti. Take, for example, the controversy between the latter and the liberal press as to whether Russia is a constitutional monarchy: It is not, says Moskovskiye Vedomosti. It is, say the Cadet newspapers in unison. In this controversy, Moskovskiye Vedomosti is progressive and the Cadet newspapers are reactionary; for Moskovskiye Vedomosti is telling the truth, exposing illusions, aussprechen was ist,[3] whereas the Cadets are telling a lie—a well-meaning, benevolent, sincerely-conscientious, beautiful, graceful, scientifically-smooth, Kiesewetter-varnished, drawing-room polite lie: but a lie nevertheless. And there is nothing more dangerous, nothing more harmful, in the present period of the struggle—considering the present objective conditions—than such a lie.

A slight digression. Recently I delivered a lecture on political topics at the house of a very enlightened and extremely amiable Cadet. We had a discussion. Our host said: Imagine there is a wild beast before us, a lion; and we two are slaves who have been thrown to this lion. Would it be appropriate if we started an argument? Is it not our duty to unite to fight this common enemy, to "isolate reaction", as that most wise and most far-sighted of Social-Democrats, G. V. Plekhanov, so excellently puts it? The analogy is a good one, and I accept it, I replied. But what if one of the slaves advises securing weapons and attacking the lion, while the other, in the very midst of the struggle, notices a tab reading "Constitution" suspended from the lion's neck, and starts shouting: "I am opposed to violence, both from the Right and from the Left"; "I am a member of a parliamentary party and stand for constitutional methods."

Under those circumstances would not the lion's cub who blurted out the lion's real intentions, be doing more to educate the masses and to develop their political and class consciousness, than the slave being mauled by the lion who was preaching faith in tabs?

The whole point is that, in using the stock argument that Social-Democrats must support the bourgeois democrats, people too often allow general abstract propositions to obscure the concrete situation, in which a resolute struggle for parliamentarism is maturing and in which the autocratic government is playing at parliamentarism as one of the means of combating parliamentarism. In such circumstances, when the final battle outside parliament still lies ahead, to advocate that the workers' party should support the party of parliamentary compromisers, the party of constitutional illusions, would be a really fatal mistake, if not a crime against the proletariat.

Let us imagine that we have in Russia a firmly established parliamentary system. This would mean that parliament had already become the main form of the domination of the ruling classes and forces, that it had become the principal arena of the conflict of social and political interests. There would be no revolutionary movement in the direct sense of the term; the economic and other conditions would not be engendering revolutionary outbreaks in the period we are assuming. No declamations, however revolutionary, could of course "call forth" revolution in such circumstances. It would be utterly wrong for Social-Democrats in such conditions to renounce the parliamentary struggle. It would be the duty of the workers' party to take up parliamentarism most seriously; to take part in "Duma" elections and in the "Duma" itself; and to adjust all its

tactics to the conditions favourable for the formation and successful functioning of a parliamentary Social-Democratic Party. In those circumstances, it would be our bounden duty to support the Cadet Party in parliament against all parties to the right of it. Then, too, it would be wrong categorically to object to election agreements with this party in joint elections, say, in gubernia election meetings (if the elections were indirect). More than that. It would be the duty of the Social-Democrats in parliament to support even the Shipovites against the real, brazen reactionaries. We would then say: reaction is trying to isolate us; we must try to isolate reaction.

Today, however, there is nothing like an established, universally-recognised and really parliamentary regime in Russia. The main form of domination of the ruling classes and social forces in Russia today is an avowedly non-parliamentary form; parliament is admittedly not the principal arena of the conflict of social and political interests. In these circumstances, it would be suicidal for the workers' party to support the party of parliamentary compromisers. On the other hand, support for the bourgeois democrats who are operating in a non-parliamentary manner, even if spontaneously, sporadically and unconsciously (like the peasant outbreaks) comes to the forefront, becomes a real, serious business, to which all else must be subordinated. In such social and political conditions, insurrection is a reality, while parliamentarism is a plaything, an unimportant field of struggle, a bait rather than a real concession. Hence the point is not that we repudiate or underrate the importance of parliamentarism; and general phrases about parliamentarism do not affect our position at all. The point is that in the particular conditions precisely of the present stage of the democratic revolution the bourgeois

compromisers, the liberal monarchists, while not denying that Durnovo may simply send the Duma packing, or that the law may finally reduce this Duma to a cipher, nevertheless declare that parliamentarism is a serious affair and that insurrection is utopia, anarchism, rebelliousness, impotent revolutionism, or whatever else the Kiesewetters, Milyukovs, Struves, Izgoyevs and other heroes of philistinism may call it.

Let us imagine that the Social-Democratic Party had taken part in the Duma elections, and that a number of Social- Democratic electors had been elected. Having plunged into this stupid election farce, we would have had to sup port the Cadets to prevent the Black Hundreds from winning. The Social-Democratic Party would have had to conclude an election agreement with the Cadets. With the aid of the latter, a certain number of Social-Democrats would have been elected to the Duma. We ask, would the game have been worth the candle? Would we have gained or lost by this? In the first place, we would not have been able to inform the masses about the terms and the character of our election agreements with the Cadets from the Social-Democratic point of view. The Cadet newspapers, in hundreds of thousands and millions of copies, would have spread bourgeois lies and bourgeois distortions of the class aims of the proletariat far and wide. Our leaflets and our little reservations in individual declarations would have been but a drop in the bucket. In practice, we would have turned out to be a dumb appendage of the Cadets. Secondly, by entering into an agreement we would undoubtedly, tacitly or openly and formally— it makes no difference—have undertaken before the proletariat a certain amount of responsibility for the Cadets; we would have vouched for them being better than all the others; we would have guaranteed that

their Cadet Duma would help the people; we would have been responsible for the whole of their Cadet policy. Whether we would have been able to disclaim responsibility for any particular steps taken by the Cadets, by means of subsequent "declarations", is an open question; and besides, the declarations would have remained mere declarations, whereas the election agreement would have remained a fact. But have we any grounds whatever for even indirectly vouching for the Cadets before the proletariat and the masses of the peasantry? Have not the Cadets given us thousands of proofs of their affinity with those German Cadet professors, with those "Frankfurt phrase-mongers", who managed to convert, not merely a Duma, but a National Constituent Assembly from an instrument for the development of the revolution into an instrument for toning down the revolution, for throttling (morally) the revolution? It would have been a mistake for the Social-Democrats to support the Cadet Party, and our Party has done the right thing in boycotting the Duma elections.

Even now it cannot be the task of the Social-Democrats to support the Cadet Party. We cannot support a Cadet Duma. In war, compromisers and deserters may be even more dangerous than the enemy. Shipov, at any rate, does not call himself a "democrat", and the "muzhik" who wants "people's freedom" will not follow his lead. But if the party of "people's freedom", after concluding a pact of mutual assistance with the Social-Democrats, were to strike a bargain with the autocracy to substitute a Ministry headed by this very Shipov for a constituent assembly, or were to confine its "activities" to making high-sounding speeches and proposing grandiloquent resolutions, we would find ourselves in a most false position.

To say that the task of the workers' party at the present time is to support the Cadets would be the same as saying that the function of steam is not to drive a ship's engine, but to keep up the possibility of sounding the ship's siren. If there is steam in the boiler, it will be possible to sound the siren. If the revolution is strong, the Cadets will also be able to sound their siren. It is quite easy to imitate the sound of a siren, and in the history of the struggle for parliamentarism bourgeois betrayers of people's freedom have many times imitated the sound of the siren and bamboozled simple-hearted folk who put their trust in various "first representative assemblies".

Our task is not to support the Cadet Duma, but to use the conflicts within this Duma, or connected with it, for choosing the right moment to attack the enemy, the right moment for an insurrection against the autocracy. What we have to do is to take account of how the political crisis in the Duma and around it is growing. As a means of testing public opinion and defining as correctly and precisely as possible the moment when "boiling point" is reached, this Duma campaign ought to be of enormous value to us, but only as a symptom, not as the real field of struggle. It is not the Cadet Duma that we shall support; it is not with the Cadet Party that we must reckon, but with those elements of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and particularly of the peasantry, who have voted for the Cadets, and who. will inevitably be disillusioned with them and get into a fighting mood. And the more decisive the victory of the Cadets in the Duma, the more rapidly will this take place. Our task is to use the respite that will be provided by an opposition Duma (and as the proletariat needs time to rally its forces properly, this respite will be very much to our advantage), to organise the workers, to expose constitutional illusions, and to prepare for a

military offensive. Our task is to be at our post when the Duma farce develops into a new great political crisis; and our aim then will be, not support for the Cadets (at best they will be only a weak mouthpiece of the revolutionary people), but the overthrow of the autocratic government and the transfer of power to the revolutionary people. If the proletariat and the peasantry are victorious in their insurrection, the Cadet Duma will in a trice draw up a document declaring its association with the manifesto of the revolutionary government announcing the convocation of a national constituent assembly. If the insurrection is suppressed, the victor, exhausted by the struggle, may be compelled to yield a good half of his power to the Cadet Duma, which will sit down to the feast, as it were, and adopt a resolution deploring the "folly" of armed uprising at a time when a genuine constitutional system was supposed to be so possible and so near at hand.... Find the corpses, and you will always find the worms.

V. I. Lenin

To: A. V. LUNACHARSKY

October 11, 1905

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 34, pages 352-354.

Dear An. Vas.,

Your article deals with a subject that is extremely interesting and very timely. Recently, in a leading article, Leipziger Volkszeitung ridiculed the Zemstvo members for their September Congress, for "playing at a Constitution", for already posing as parliamentarians, etc., etc. The mistake of Parvus and Martov needs analysing from this aspect. But your article gives no analysis. I believe the article should be revised along one of two lines: either the weight of emphasis should be shifted to our new-Iskrists, who are "playing at parliamentarism", and you should demonstrate in detail the relative, temporary importance of parliamentarism, the futility of "parliamentary illusions" in an era of revolutionary struggle, etc., by explaining the whole thing from the beginning (for Russians this is very useful!) and introducing a bit of Hilferding, just by way of illustration; or else you should take Hilferding as a basis—the article will then need less revision—give it a different heading, but describe more clearly Hilferding's method of presenting the question. Of course, you may find another plan of revision, but please set to work on it at once, without fail. You have time for it, since the article could not go into this issue (the Moscow events the old material have taken up all the space). So, the deadline is Tuesday, October 17. Please make it a comprehensive article and send it by October

17. It would be better to revise it along the first lines, it may then turn out to be an editorial!

If we already had a parliament, we would certainly support the Cadets, Milyukov and Co. contra Moskov- skiye Vedomosti. For example, when balloting, etc. Such action there would not in the slightest degree violate the independence of the class party of Social-Democracy. But in an era not of parliament, but of revolution (you make the distinction in the very heading), support for people who are incapable of fighting in a revolutionary way is 1) violation of the independence of our Party. The deal cannot be clear and above-hoard. It is precisely the "sale" of our right to revolution, as you say, and not the use of our right for the purpose of support. In a parliament we give support without in any way disappearing. Now we are disappearing by obliging the Milyukovs to speak for us on definite terms. Further, what is most important 2) such support is betrayal of the revolution. There is no parliament as yet, it is only an illusion of the Milyukovs. We must fight in a revolutionary way for a parliament, but not in a parliamentary way for a revolution; we must fight in a revolutionary way for a strong parliament, and not in an impotent "parliament" for a revolution. In Russia now, without the victory of the revolution, all victories in "parliament" (the Duma or the like) are nothing, worse than nothing, for they blind the eyes by a fiction. Parvus has not understood this.

The Cadets have already become regierungsfähig (the Trubetskois and Manuilovs in the role of rectors, etc.), they have already climbed to the second storey of freedom of assembly (at the price of debasing assemblies), the storey of quasi-parliamentarism. All they need is that the proletariat, while

remaining actually in the basement, should imagine itself on the second storey, should fancy itself a parliamentary force and agree to "conditions" about "support" and so on. That is a rich theme! We now are strong owing to the revolutionary struggle of the people and weak in a quasi-parliamentary respect. With the Cadets it is just the reverse. They calculate on dragging us into quasi-parliamentarism. Iskra has allowed itself to be fooled. It is on this point that a detailed analysis of the relation of "'parliamentarism' to revolution" would be appropriate (cf. Marx on the class struggles in France in 1848).

These ideas outlined by you (I am stating them, of course, in a very general and inexact way) must be amplified, mulled over, and served up. People in Russia are now badly in need of having the relation between parliamentarism and revolution explained to them from the very beginning. But Martov and Co. go into hysterics and scream: if only we would become legal! If only we would act openly! It doesn't matter how, so long as it's legal! It is now of all times that we need steadfastness, the continuation of the revolution, struggle against a wretched semi-legality. Iskra has failed to understand this. Like all opportunists, they do not believe in the energy and stubbornness of the workers' revolutionary struggle. Moscow is a lesson to them. And here we have that vulgarian Parvus applying to Russia the tactics of petty deals!

Did you receive my letter? All the very best to you and to An. Al.

Yours, Lenin

Lenin

Guerrilla Warfare

Proletary, No. 5, September 30, 1906

Collected Works, Volume 11, pages 213-223.

The question of guerrilla action is one that greatly interests our Party and the mass of the workers. We have dealt with this question in passing several times, and now we propose to give the more complete statement of our views we have promised.

Let us begin from the beginning. What are the fundamental demands which every Marxist should make of an examination of the question of forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism differs from all primitive forms of socialism by not binding the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It recognises the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not "concoct" them, but only generalises, organises, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas and to all doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the mass struggle in progress, which, as the movement develops, as the class-consciousness of the masses grows, as economic and political crises become acute, continually gives rise to new and more varied methods of defence and attack. Marxism, therefore, positively does not reject any form of struggle. Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle possible and in existence at the given moment only, recognising as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, inevitably arise as the given social situation, changes. In this respect

Marxism learns, if we may so express it, from mass practice, and makes no claim whatever to teach the masses forms of struggle invented by "systematisers" in the seclusion of their studies. We know—said Kautsky, for instance, when examining the forms of social revolution—that the coming crisis will introduce new forms of struggle that we are now unable to foresee.

In the second place, Marxism demands an absolutely historical examination of the question of the forms of struggle. To treat this question apart from the concrete historical situation betrays a failure to understand the rudiments of dialectical materialism. At different stages of economic evolution, depending on differences in political, national-cultural, living and other conditions, different forms of struggle come to the fore and become the principal forms of struggle; and in connection with this, the secondary, auxiliary forms of struggle undergo change in their ·turn. To attempt to answer yes or no to the question whether any particular means of struggle should be used, without making a detailed examination of the concrete situation of the given movement at the given stage of its development, means completely to abandon the Marxist position.

These are the two principal theoretical propositions by which we must be guided. The history of Marxism in Western Europe provides an infinite number of examples corroborating what has been said. European Social-Democracy at the present time regards parliamentarism and the trade union movement as the principal forms of struggle; it recognised insurrection in the past, and is quite prepared to recognise it, should conditions change, in the future—despite the opinion of bourgeois liberals like the Russian Cadets and the Bezzaglavtsi. Social-Democracy

in the seventies rejected the general strike as a social panacea, as a means of overthrowing the bourgeoisie at one stroke by non-political means—but Social-Democracy fully recognises the mass political strike (especially after the experience of Russia in 1905) as one of the methods of struggle essential under certain conditions. Social-Democracy recognised street barricade fighting in the forties, rejected it for definite reasons at the end of the nineteenth century, and expressed complete readiness to revise the latter view and to admit the expediency of barricade fighting after the experience of Moscow, which, in the words of K. Kautsky, initiated new tactics of barricade fighting.

Having established the general Marxist propositions, let us turn to the Russian revolution. Let us recall the historical development of the forms of struggle it produced. First there were the economic strikes of workers (1896-1900), then the political demonstrations of workers and students (1901-02), peasant revolts (1902), the beginning of mass political strikes variously combined with demonstrations (Rostov 1902, the strikes in the summer of 1903, January 9, 1905), the all-Russian political strike accompanied by local cases of barricade fighting (October 1905), mass barricade fighting and armed uprising (1905, December), the peaceful parliamentary struggle (April-June 1906), partial military revolts (June 1905-July 1906) and partial peasant revolts (autumn 1905-autumn 1906).

Such is the state of affairs in the autumn of 1906 as concerns forms of struggle in general. The "retaliatory" form of struggle adopted by the autocracy is the Black-Hundred pogrom, from Kishinev in the spring of 1903 to Sedlets in the autumn of 1906. All through this period the organisation of Black-Hundred

pogroms and the beating up of Jews, students, revolutionaries and class-conscious workers continued to progress and perfect itself, combining the violence of Black-Hundred troops with the violence of hired ruffians, going as far as the use of artillery in villages and towns and merging with punitive expeditions, punitive trains and so forth.

Such is the principal background of the picture. Against this background there stands out—unquestionably as something partial, secondary and auxiliary —the phenomenon to the study and assessment of which the present article is devoted. What is this phenomenon? What are its forms? What are its causes? When did it arise and how far has it spread? What is its significance in the general course of the revolution? What is its relation to the struggle of the working class organised and led by Social-Democracy? Such are the questions which we must now proceed to examine after having sketched the general background of the picture.

(…)

V. I. Lenin

An Appeal to the Party by Delegates to the Unity Congress Who Belonged to the Former "Bolshevik" Group

April 25-26 (May 8-9), 1906

Collected Works, Volume 10, pages 310-316.

Comrades,

The Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. has been held. The split no longer exists. Not only have the former "Bolshevik" and "Menshevik" factions completely amalgamated organisationally, but unity has also been achieved between the R.S.D.L.P. and the Polish Social-Democrats,[2] a unity agreement has been signed with the Lettish Social-Democrats,[3] and unity has been assured with the Jewish Social-Democrats, i.e., the[4] Bund. The political significance of these events would have been very great in any circumstances, but it is truly enormous in the historic period through which we are now passing.

The fate of the great Russian revolution is apparently to be determined in the near future. The proletariat leading the broad masses of the town and rural poor has been marching at the head of the revolution from the very beginning of the movement up to this day. In view of the coming formidable, decisive events in the people's struggle, it is all the more essential to attain the practical unity of the class-conscious proletariat of the whole of Russia, and of all her nationalities. In a revolutionary epoch like the present, all theoretical errors and tactical deviations of the Party are most ruthlessly criticised by experience itself, which enlightens and educates the working

class with unprecedented rapidity. At such a time, the duty of every Social-Democrat is to strive to ensure that the ideological struggle within the Party on questions of theory and tactics is conducted as openly, widely and freely as possible, but that on no account does it disturb or hamper the unity of revolutionary action of the Social-Democratic proletariat.

The great Russian revolution is now on the eve of its turning-point. The struggle waged by all classes of bourgeois Russia against the autocracy brought into being a paper constitution. A section of the bourgeoisie is completely satisfied with this and has turned away from the revolution. Another section, wishing to go further, deludes itself with hopes of a "constitutional" path of struggle, and is ready to regard the election victory of the wavering and hypocritical bourgeois Cadet Party as an important victory for people's freedom.

The broad masses of the peasants, fighting courageously against old, semi-feudal Russia, against the omnipotence of officials and the yoke of the landlords, remain on the side of the revolution, but they are far from being fully class-conscious. The revolutionary-democratic section of the town petty bourgeoisie also shows but little political awareness. Only the proletariat, which fought heroically for freedom in October, and took up arms in defence of it in December, remains, as before, a consistently revolutionary class, which is gathering fresh forces and is now consciously preparing for a new and still greater battle.

The tsarist government is now with cynical frankness playing at a constitution. It retains its former power, it continues and intensifies the persecution of the fighters for liberty, its obvious intention is to make the Duma a futile talking shop, a screen for

the autocracy, an instrument for deceiving the people. Whether these tactics will be crowned with success or not will be decided in the very near future, by the outcome of the new revolutionary explosion now coming to a head.

If the proletariat of the whole of Russia closes its ranks, if it succeeds in rousing all the genuinely revolutionary sections of the people, all those who want to fight and not to strike a bargain, if it trains itself well for the struggle and selects the proper moment for the final battle for freedom, it will be victorious. Then the tsar's cynical playing at a constitution will fail; then the bourgeoisie will not succeed in striking a bargain with the autocracy; then the Russian revolution will not turn out to be as incomplete, half-hearted, and three-fourths fruitless for the interests of the working class and the peasants, as were the revolutions of the nineteenth century in Western Europe. Then it will really be a great revolution, a complete victory of the people's uprising will free bourgeois Russia of all the old fetters, and will perhaps open the epoch of socialist revolution in the West.

While striving for a complete democratic revolution, Social-Democrats must in all their work reckon with the inevitability of a new revolutionary explosion. We must ruthlessly expose the constitutional illusions fostered both by the government and by the bourgeoisie as represented by its liberal party—the Cadets; we must call upon the revolutionary peasantry to close its ranks for the sake of a complete victory of a peasant uprising; we must explain to the masses of the people the great importance of the first December uprising and the inevitability of a new revolt, which alone will be able really to wrest power from the tsarist autocracy and really transfer it to the people.

Such must be the basic aims of our tactics at the present moment in history.

We cannot and must not conceal the fact that we are profoundly convinced that the Unity Congress did not quite appreciate these tasks. The three most important resolutions of the Congress clearly bear the stamp of the erroneous views of the former "Menshevik" faction, which numerically was predominant at the Congress.

The Congress accepted the principle of "municipalisation" in its agrarian programme. Municipalisation means peasant ownership of allotment land and the renting by the peasants of the landed estates transferred to the Zemstvos. This, in effect, is something midway between real agrarian revolution and Cadet agrarian reform. The peasants will not accept such a plan. They will either demand the simple division of the land, or its complete transfer to the people as their property. Municipalisation would be a serious democratic reform only in the event of a complete democratic revolution, if a republican regime were established and if government officials were elected by the people. We proposed to the Congress that it should at least link municipalisation with these conditions, but the Congress rejected our proposal. And without these conditions municipalisation, as a liberal bureaucratic reform, will give the peasants something very different from what they require, and at the same time it will give new strength, new influence to the bourgeois anti-proletarian elements which dominate the Zemstvos. For it virtually puts the distribution of the land into their hands. We must explain this point to the broad masses of the workers and peasants.

In its resolution on the Duma, the Congress declared it desirable that a Social-Democratic parliamentary group in this Duma should be formed. The Congress refused to reckon with the fact that nine-tenths of the class-conscious workers of Russia, including all the Polish, Lettish and Jewish Social-Democratic proletarians, boycotted the Duma. The Congress rejected a proposal to make participation in the elections conditional on whether it would be possible to conduct really wide agitation among the masses. It rejected a proposal that only those whom workers' organisations had nominated for election to the Duma could be members of the Social-Democratic parliamentary group. The Congress, therefore, embarked on parliamentarism without even providing the safeguards for the Party which in this connection have been produced by the experience of revolutionary Social-Democrats in Europe.

As Social-Democrats we, of course, have recognised the obligation in principle of using parliamentarism as a weapon of the proletarian struggle. But the point is whether it is admissible for Social-Democrats to take part, in present conditions, in a "parliament" like our Duma. Is it admissible to form a parliamentary group without Social-Democratic members of parliament elected by workers' organisations? Our opinion is that it is not.

The Congress rejected the proposal to make it one of the tasks of the Party to combat playing at constitutionalism, to combat constitutional illusions. The Congress stated no opinion on the dual nature of the Cadet Party, which is predominant in the Duma and which inclines so strongly towards making a deal with the autocracy, towards blunting and putting an end to the revolution. The Congress allowed itself to be too greatly

impressed by the fleeting and tinsel success of the party of bourgeois compromisers between the autocracy and people's freedom.

Nor, in its resolutions on the armed uprising, did the Congress provide what was necessary, namely, direct criticism of the mistakes of the proletariat, a clear assessment of the experience of October-December 1905—it did not even attempt in them to study the relationship between strike and insurrection. Instead of all this, a sort of timid evasion of the armed uprising predominates in the resolutions. The Congress did not openly and clearly tell the working class that the December uprising was a mistake; but at the same time, in a covert way, it condemned that uprising. We think that this is more likely to befog the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat than to promote it.

We must and shall fight ideologically against those decisions of the Congress which we regard as erroneous. But at the same time we declare to the whole Party that we are opposed to a split of any kind. We stand for submission to the decisions of the Congress. Rejecting boycott of the Central Commit tee and valuing joint work, we agreed to those who share our views going on the Central Committee, although they will comprise a negligible minority in it. We are profoundly convinced that the workers' Social-Democratic organisations must be united, but in these united organisations there must be wide and free discussion of Party questions, free comradely criticism and assessment of events in Party life.

On the question of organisation, we differed only as regards the rights of the editorial board of the Central Organ. We insisted on the right of the Central Committee to appoint and dismiss

the editors of the Central Organ.[5] We were all agreed on the principle of democratic centralism, on guarantees for the rights of all minorities and for all loyal opposition, on the autonomy of every Party organisation, on recognising that all Party functionaries must be elected, account able to the Party and subject to recall. We see the observance in practice of these principles of organisation, their sincere and consistent application, as a guarantee against splits, a guarantee that the ideological struggle in the Party can and must prove fully consistent with strict organisational unity, with the submission of all to the decisions of the Unity Congress.

We call upon all our fellow-thinkers to accept such submission and such ideological struggle: we invite all the members of the Party carefully to assess the resolutions of the Congress. Revolution teaches and we believe that practical unity in struggle of the Social-Democratic proletariat throughout Russia will safeguard our Party against fatal errors during the climax of the impending political crisis. In the course of the fight, events themselves will suggest to the working masses the right tactics to adopt. Let us do all in our power to ensure that our estimate of these tactics contributes to the fulfilment of the tasks of revolutionary Social-Democracy, to prevent the workers' party from deviating from the consistent proletarian path to hunt after some cheap fleeting success, so that the socialist proletariat may perform to the end its great role of vanguard fighter for liberty!

V. I. Lenin

A New Upswing

Volna, No. 10, May 6, 1906.

Collected Works, Volume 10, pages 386-391.

The opening of the Duma sessions has coincided with the outbreak of Black-Hundred riots. The first steps on the path of "peaceful parliamentarism", a path which caused the Cadets and all philistines in politics to go into raptures and tears of joy, have coincided with the most brutal, most direct and immediate manifestations of civil war. The introduction of the "constitutional" method of deciding affairs of state, the method of ballot-papers and the counting of votes, has coincided with outbreaks of the most primitive violence, with the settlement of affairs of state by exterminating dissidents, by annihilating political opponents (literally annihilating by fire and sword).

Is this a chance coincidence? Of course not. And it would be inadequate as an explanation to say that the police is organising riots for provocative purposes, for the purpose of discrediting the Duma. Of course, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the police is directly involved. Of course, the police is organising, inciting and provoking. All this is true. In a war which the bureaucracy is waging, virtually for its very existence, its servants and supporters literally stick at nothing. But why do they have to resort to such methods of struggle, and on such a large scale, precisely at the present time? This question is worth considering, in order to avoid ascribing whole periods of revolutionary development to the exceptional viciousness, exceptional blood thirstiness and exceptional bestiality of the combatants.

We are witnessing the beginning of a social revival. The unemployed movement, the May Day demonstrations, the growing unrest among the peasantry and in the armed forces, the meetings, the press, the unions, are all unambiguous indications of this revival. In a matter of days the revival of the broad popular movement has already outstripped the revival that was expressed in the victory of the Cadets and of the "Left" in general at the elections. The Cadets have already fallen behind. The Cadet Duma is already fading—it is withering before it has had time to blossom. This withering of our barren petty-bourgeois flowers, this consternation of the Cadets, is most characteristically expressed, among other things, in an article by Mr. D. Protopopov (a Cadet member of the State Duma) in yesterday's issue of Duma. Mr. Protopopov says, complaining and wailing: "The country expects from the State Duma the radical and immediate solution of a number of extremely intricate problems and, above all, the equally immediate practical introduction of the expected reforms." But have a heart, my dear fellow-citizens— wails this Cadet. We have neither a "magician's wand", nor complete power" (the Cadet forgets to add that neither does the programme, i.e., the political ideal, of the Cadets, include complete power for the people). The State Duma is not the Convention. And from the lips of this Cadet comes the matchless, almost touching admission of a terrified philistine: "Only such a Duma-Convention could satisfy the demands of the bulk of the nation." What is true is true. "The bulk", perhaps the whole mass of the workers and peasants, are demanding a Convention, and all they get is—a Cadet Duma. Poor, poor Cadets! Could they have anticipated that they would be so quickly and so hopelessly overtaken by the rising tide?

And now this great tide is the material basis of the fact that the struggle is becoming extraordinarily acute, that peaceful parliamentarism" is fading and slipping into the background, and that playing at a constitution is giving way to the settlement of affairs of state by force. The result is the resumption of the October uprising, but on a much wider basis, on a much greater scale, with the masses of the peasantry and the working class more politically conscious and (thanks to what they passed through in the period of October-December) with incomparably more political experience. In October the combatant forces were equally balanced. The old autocracy proved to be no longer strong enough to govern the country. The people were not yet strong enough to secure complete power that would ensure complete freedom. The Manifesto of October 17 was the juridical expression of this equilibrium of forces. But this equilibrium, which compelled the old regime to make a concession, forced it in to recognising freedom on paper, merely signified a temporary halt, but not the cessation of the struggle. In October and November it was said that our government had "gone on strike", that it had been "standing rigid" like a setter over the revolution, that it had paused as it waited for the opportune moment, and had plunged into a desperate battle which ended in its victory. Political philistines, narrow-mind ed as usual, with the timidity and flabby, Pharisaical "idealism" that is characteristic of them, expostulated, wept, and voiced their indignation at the "immorality" of the government's "strike", of its standing rigid like a setter over the revolution. Their indignation was totally out of place. "In war as in war." In every war, when the belligerents' forces are equally balanced, they pause, gather strength, recuperate, assimilate the experience they have

obtained, make preparations, and then plunge into the next battle. This is what happened in the case of the armies of Kuropatkin and Oyama. So it has been, and always will be, in any great civil war. "In war as in war."

But civil war differs from ordinary war by its immeasurably greater complexity, by the fact that the belligerents are unknown and unknowable—because of desertions from one camp to another (Octobrists go over to the side of the government, a section of the armed forces go over to the side of the people), and because it is impossible to draw a hard and fast line between "combatants" and "non-combatants". When the government "goes on strike", when the police pauses waiting and "stands rigid", the war goes on just the same, precisely because it is a civil war, because among the population itself there are those who are interested in defending the old regime and those who are fighting for freedom. That is why the present upswing, which has equalised the belligerent forces, is also with inexorable necessity weakening the government, compelling it to "go on strike", to "stand rigid over the revolution" again to a certain extent, and on the other hand, is leading to a resumption of the October, November and December forms of struggle. Whoever wants to take a conscious stand on the great events unfolding before us, whoever wants to learn from the revolution, must realise that these forms of struggle are inevitable, and must think out the tasks that these forms of struggle impose upon us.

The Cadets, intoxicated with their election victories, have written reams of paper about Russia having taken the path of parliamentarism. The Social-Democrats in the Right wing of our Party have allowed themselves to be carried away by the

general stream. At the Unity Congress of the Party, although they were the victors, and in spite of the protests of the Left Social-Democrats, they withdrew their resolution on the upswing of the revolution, on the main forms of the movement at the present time, and on the tasks of the proletariat. They behaved in this respect like Mr. Milyukov who, at the last congress of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, touched on the question whether the people were not more revolutionary than the Duma, whether a revolutionary struggle in the narrow sense of the word was not inevitable, but at once timidly withdrew the question from discussion. It was natural for a Cadet to evade such an issue; but it is unseemly for Social-Democrats to do so, and they are already paying the penalty for this. Forms of struggle are already arising, with elemental force, that are pushing the Duma into the background and are bringing nearer another October and another December, whether we like it or not.

At the Party Congress, a Right Social-Democrat scoffed at the resolution of the Left Social-Democrats which openly and straightforwardly recognised as the "main form of the movement", not the toy-constitutional, but the October-December form, i.e., the action of the broad masses, who directly sweep away the old laws and the old instruments of authority, and make use of a new authority, created in the very course of the struggle, as a weapon for winning freedom. There is no evidence of these forms of struggle, exclaimed this Right Social-Democratic speaker. They do not exist, they are the figment of the imagination of our Lefts, those visionaries, those rebels, those anarchists. "Take off your Cadet spectacles!"—we retorted to this comrade at the Congress. You will then see something more than what is taking place on the surface. You

will see that it is not the Duma struggle that is the main struggle, you will realise that objective conditions are making the extra-Duma forms of the move ment inevitable, are making them the main, vital, fundamental and decisive forms.

A week or two has passed since these debates took place at the Congress. And already the revolution is knocking the Cadet spectacles off the noses not only of the Right Social-Democrats, but also of the broad masses of the people. The Duma is already fading, constitutional illusions are being dispelled. The October-December forms of struggle, which only yesterday short-sighted people, and those who yield to the moods of the moment, refused to see, are already approaching. And the Social-Democrats will be failing in their duty to the proletariat if they do not realise that these forms of struggle must inevitably grow and develop, if they do not fully explain to the masses the tasks which the situation is calling forth, and which will soon confront them. The Social-Democrats will prove unworthy of the class they represent if they attempt to evade the study and appraisal of these forms by uttering disparaging catchwords like "rebelliousness" and "Narodnaya Volya-ism" that are so often heard from the Right wing of our Party. The tide is rising spontaneously, and we must do all in our power to bring more consciousness and organisation into this upsurge than we were able to do in October and December.

We must not force the pace of events. It is not in our interest to hasten an explosion at present. There can be no doubt about that. This is the lesson we must learn from the experience of the end of 1905.But this is only a small part of our task:

it is a purely negative definition of our tactics. Whoever con fines himself to this aspect of the matter, whoever exalts this

negative task to something positive, is bound to slide into the role of a bourgeois advocate of compromise between people's freedom and the autocracy.

The party of the working class has an extremely serious, urgent and fundamental task to fulfil. We must concentrate all our plans, all our efforts, all our propaganda, agitation, organisation and immediate practical work on ensuring that the proletariat and the peasantry are better prepared for the new, decisive struggle. We cannot will the choice of the forms of this struggle: they are being determined with iron necessity by the historical development of the Russian revolution. We already know from experience what the government's "standing rigid" means, and what the growing agitation among the masses over the rapidly maturing general political crisis means. We know with what dizzying rapidity the October struggle grew, and how inevitably it developed into the December struggle. Therefore let everybody be at his post. Nobody can forecast the moment when things will. reach their climax; nobody knows in what order and in what combination the December and October forms of the move ment will finally develop. But they are already beginning to develop. The organs of this movement are already springing up. On the solidarity, class-consciousness, self-control and resolution of the advanced class depends in large measure, if not entirely, the outcome of the great revolution.

V. I. Lenin

Postscript to the Article: "The Social-Democrats and the Election Campaign"

Proletary, No. 7, November 10, 1906.

The above-mentioned article was already written when G. V. Plekhanov's "Open Letter to Class-Conscious Workers" appeared in the newspaper Tovarishch. In that letter Plekhanov, "manoeuvring" between the Left wing of the bourgeoisie and the Right wing of the Social-Democrats, finally breaks both with the principles of international revolutionary Social-Democracy and with the decisions of the Unity Congress of our Party. The Party Congress formally forbade all blocs whatsoever with bourgeois parties. The class-conscious, organised proletarian at his Party meetings calls all blocs with the bourgeoisie "betrayal of the cause of the proletariat"; in his article in Tovarishch and in his letter to the Party organisations, L. Martov, adopting the Bolshevik, i.e., the consistent revolutionary standpoint, emphatically expresses his opposition to all blocs at the first stage of the elections. "On the first question ["blocs" or electoral pacts]," writes Martov, "I would recommend that we insist, in conformity with the resolution of the Congress, upon complete independence during our participation in the first stage of the elections, i.e., at the stage when we come before the masses." Plekhanov regards this method of presenting the question as "misconceived hostility to compromise". "Where we cannot be sure of the victory of our candidate," writes Plekhanov, "it is our duty to enter into an agreement with other parties who wish to fight against our old regime." While thus sanctioning agreements with bourgeois parties in spite of the decision of the Congress,

Plekhanov, however, displays his "political sagacity" by foreseeing cases when we should not enter into such agreements. He writes: "Where there is no doubt that we shall succeed in getting our candidate elected we can and must act independently of the other parties." What a wonderful piece of "political sagacity"! Where we are sure of getting our candidate elected ourselves we must do it ourselves. Where we are not sure, we must apply for assistance ... to those "who wish to fight against the old regime", or else help these "wishers" to get their candidate elected. And where those "who wish to fight" are sure of getting their candidates elected themselves, what do you think, 0f contributor to the Cadet press, Plekhanov, will they be so anxious to conclude an agreement with us? Indeed, if we are talking about agreements, every political infant is aware that they are required only in cases where a party is not sure of getting its candidates elected by its own unaided efforts. We, however, are opposed to all agreements even under such circumstances. But G. V. Plekhanov, like a true knight of freedom, sounds the tocsin in the Cadet Tovarishch and calls together all those "who wish to fight".... Come, all ye "wishers"! The proletariat is fighting, you— "wish" to fight! Excellent.... If that is not enough for a proletarian, he must assuredly be an "enemy of freedom".

Thus, the leader of the Mensheviks, the darling of the Cadets, forgetting all that he said after the dissolution of the Duma, is little by little, step by step, sinking to the level of ... Cherevanin.... With his usual "swiftness, dash and unerring eye" Plekhanov is rushing to the extreme right of our Right wing. Martov is left far behind; Sotsial-Demokrat can hardly keep pace with its ideological leader. And the organ of the Central Committee, after a long-winded argument about the

class character of our election campaign, proposes an intricate system of agreements, building a ladder by which Social-Democrats should descend to the level of the Cadets. At first, suggests Sotsial-Demokrat, independent, i.e., class action where we have chances of success; where there are no chances of success, we must combine with the bourgeois parties which "are striving with us for the convocation of a constituent assembly"; if these parties do not want the constituent assembly—so much the worse (this is the third, last, anti-class and anti-democratic step)— we shall combine with them nevertheless. How the Central Committee, which was elected by the Congress to carry out the decisions of the Congress, contrives to act in violation of these decisions is a secret known only to itself. The fact remains that at the present moment we are witnessing the very disgraceful (for Social-Democracy) spectacle of "the crab crawling backwards" and the "swan straining skyward" on the editorial board of the leading, central organ, when on a question of such import to us as electoral tactics there is neither unity of thought nor unity of action, not only in the Party as a whole, but even in the "leading" faction in that Party. What country and what Socialist Party, except, perhaps, the most opportunist, would tolerate such political depravity? And the remarkable fact is that it is these crabs, pikes and swans, these two squabblers Martov and Plekhanov, who are conducting a desperate campaign against the convocation of an extraordinary congress of the Party, one which we now need more than ever.

The Social-Democrats and Electoral Agreements

V. I. Lenin

Collected Works, Volume 11, pages 275-298.

October 1906

The election campaign for the Second Duma is now a subject of great interest in the workers' party. Special attention is being devoted to the question of "blocs", i.e., permanent or temporary electoral agreements between the Social-Democrats and other parties. The bourgeois, Cadet press— Rech, Tovarishch, Novy Put, Oko, etc.—are doing their utmost to convince the workers of the need for a "bloc" (an electoral agreement) between the Social-Democrats and the Cadets. Some Menshevik Social-Democrats are also advocating such blocs (Cherevanin in Nashe Dyelo and Tovarishch), others are opposed to them (Martov in Tovarishch). The Bolshevik Social-Democrats are opposed to such blocs, and agree only to partial agreements at the higher stages of the election campaign on the distribution of seats in proportion to the polling strength of the revolutionary and opposition parties at the primary ballot.

We shall try to state briefly the case for this last standpoint.

Social-Democrats regard parliamentarism (participation in representative assemblies) as one of the means of enlightening and educating the proletariat and organising it in an independent class party; as one of the methods of the political struggle for the emancipation of the workers. This Marxist standpoint radically distinguishes Social-Democracy from bourgeois democracy, on the one hand, and from anarchism on the other. Bourgeois liberals and radicals regard

parliamentarism as the "natural" and the only normal and legitimate method of conducting state affairs in general, and they repudiate the class struggle and the class character of modern parliamentarism. The bourgeoisie exerts every effort, by every possible means and on every possible occasion, to put blinkers on the eyes of the workers to prevent them from seeing that parliamentarism is an instrument of bourgeois oppression, to prevent them from realising the historically limited importance of parliamentarism. The anarchists are also unable to appreciate the historically defined importance of parliamentarism and entirely renounce this method of struggle. That is why the Social-Democrats in Russia strenuously combat both anarchism and the efforts of the bourgeoisie to stop the revolution as soon as possible by coming to terms with the old regime on a parliamentary basis. They subordinate their parliamentary activities entirely and absolutely to the general interests of the working-class movement and to the special tasks of the proletariat in the present bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Hence it follows, firstly, that the participation of the Social-Democrats in the Duma campaign is of a quite different nature from that of other parties. Unlike them, we do not regard this campaign as an end in itself or even as being of cardinal importance. Unlike them, we subordinate this campaign to the interests of the class struggle. Unlike them, the slogan we put forward in this campaign is not parliamentarism for the sake of parliamentary reforms, but the revolutionary struggle for a constituent assembly. Moreover, we wage this struggle in its highest forms, which have arisen from the historical development of the forms of struggle during the last few years.

The years of reaction (1907–10)

V. I. Lenin

On the Road

Sotsial-Demokrat, No. 2, January 28 (February 10), 1909.

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 15, pages 345-355.

A year of disintegration, a year of ideological and political disunity, a year of Party driftage lies behind us. The membership of all our Party organisations has dropped. Some of them—namely, those whose membership was least proletarian—have fallen to pieces. The Party's semi-legal institutions created by the revolution have been broken up time after time. Things reached a point when some elements within the Party, under the impact of the general break-up, began to ask whether it was necessary to preserve the old Social-Democratic Party, whether it was necessary to continue its work, whether it was necessary to go "underground" once more, and how this was to be done. And the extreme Right (the liquidationist trend, so called) answered this question in the sense that it was necessary to legalise ourselves at all costs, even at the price of an open renunciation of the Party programme, tactics and organisation. This was undoubtedly an ideological and political crisis as well as an organisational one.

The recent All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has led the Party out on to the road, and evidently marks a turning-point in the development of the Russian working-class movement after the victory of the counter-revolution. The decisions of the conference, published in a special Report issued by the Central Committee of our

Party, have been confirmed by the Central Committee, and therefore, pending the next Congress, stand as the decisions of the whole Party. These decisions give a very definite answer to the question of the causes and the significance of the crisis, as well as the means of overcoming it. By working in the spirit of the conference resolutions, by striving to make all Party workers realise clearly and fully the present tasks of the Party, our organisations will be able to strengthen and consolidate their forces for united and effective revolutionary Social-Democratic work.

The main cause of the Party crisis is indicated in the preamble of the resolution on organisation. This main cause is the wavering intellectual and petty-bourgeois elements, of which the workers' party had to rid itself; elements who joined the working-class movement mainly in the hope of an early triumph of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and could not stand up to a period of reaction. Their instability was revealed both in theory ("retreat from revolutionary Marxism": the resolution on the present situation) and in tactics (the "whittling down of slogans"), as well as in Party organisation. The class-conscious workers repelled this instability, came out resolutely against the liquidators, began to take the management and guidance of the Party organisations into their own hands. If this hard core of our Party was unable at the outset to overcome the elements of disunity and crisis, this was not only because the task was a great and difficult one amidst the triumph of the counter-revolution, but also because a certain indifference towards the Party showed itself among those workers who, although revolutionary-minded, were not sufficiently socialist-minded. It is precisely to the class-conscious workers of Russia that the decisions of the conference are addressed in the first

place—as the crystallised opinion of Social- Democracy concerning the means of combating disunity and vacillation.

A Marxist analysis of present-day class relations and of the new policy of tsarism; an indication of the immediate aim of the struggle which our Party continues as before to set itself; an appreciation of the lessons of the revolution as regards the correctness of the revolutionary Social-Democrats' tactics; elucidation of the causes of the Party crisis; pointing out the role in combating it of the proletarian elements of the Party; solution of the problem of relations between the illegal and legal organisations; recognition of the necessity of utilising the Duma tribune and drawing up precise instructions for the guidance of our Duma group, linked with direct criticism of its mistakes—such was the principal content of the decisions of the conference, which provide a complete answer to the question of the party of the working class choosing a definite path in the present difficult period. Let us examine this answer more carefully.

The interrelation of classes in their political groupings remains the same as that which prevailed during the past period of direct revolutionary struggle of the masses. The overwhelming majority of the peasants cannot but strive for an agrarian revolution which would destroy semi-feudal landownership, and which cannot be achieved without the overthrow of tsarism. The triumph of reaction has borne down heavily on the democratic elements of the peasantry, which is incapable of forming a solid organisation; but despite all oppression, despite the Black-Hundred Duma, despite the extreme instability of the Trudoviks, the revolutionary mood of the peasant masses is clearly evidenced even by the debates in the Third Duma. The

fundamental position of the proletariat in regard to the tasks of the bourgeois- democratic revolution in Russia remains unaltered: to guide the democratic peasantry and to wrest it from the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie, the Cadet Party—which continues to draw closer and closer to the Octobrists notwithstanding petty private squabbles, and which recently has been striving to establish national-liberalism and to support tsarism and reaction by chauvinist agitation. The struggle goes on as before—says the resolution—for the complete abolition of the monarchy and the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry.

The autocracy, as hitherto, is the principal enemy of the proletariat and of all democratic trends. It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that it remains unchanged. The Stolypin "constitution" and Stolypin's agrarian policy mark a new stage in the break-down of the old, semi-patriarchal, semi-feudal tsarism, a new step towards its transformation into a bourgeois monarchy. The delegates from the Caucasus, who wished either to delete such a characterisation of the present situation altogether, or to substitute "plutocratic" for "bourgeois", were wrong. The autocracy has long been plutocratic; but it is only after the first stage of the revolution, under the impact of its blows, that. the autocracy is becoming bourgeois, both in its agrarian policy and its direct, nationally-organised alliance with certain strata of the bourgeoisie. The autocracy has been nursing the bourgeoisie for a long time now; the bourgeoisie, by means of the ruble, has long been winning its way to "the top", securing influence on legislation and administration, and a place beside the noble aristocracy. But the peculiar feature of the present situation is that the autocracy has been forced to set up a representative assembly for certain strata of the

bourgeoisie, to balance between them and the feudalist landlords, to form an alliance of these sections in the Duma; it has been forced to abandon all the hopes it had placed in the patriarchalism of the muzhik, and to seek support against the rural masses among the rich peas ants, who are ruining the village commune.

The autocracy cloaks itself with pseudo-constitutional institutions, but at the same time its class essence is being exposed as never before, owing to the alliance concluded by the tsar with the Purishkeviches and the Guchkovs, and with no one else. The autocracy is attempting to take upon itself the fulfilment of those tasks of the bourgeois revolution which are objectively necessary—the setting-up of a representative assembly of the people which would really manage the affairs of bourgeois society, and the purging of the countryside of medieval, entangled and antiquated agrarian relations. But the practical results of these new steps taken by the autocracy are, so far, exactly nil, and this only shows more clearly than ever that other forces and other means are necessary for the fulfilment of the historical task. In the minds of millions of people inexperienced in politics, the autocracy was hitherto contrasted with popular representation in general; now, the struggle is narrowing its aims, and is more concretely defining its task as the struggle for power in the state, which determines the character and significance of representation itself. That is why the Third Duma marks a special stage in the break-down of the old tsarism, in the intensification of its adventurist character, in the deepening of the old revolutionary aims, in the widening of the field of struggle (and of the numbers taking part in the struggle) for these aims.

We must get over this stage. The present new conditions require new forms of struggle. The use of the Duma tribune is an absolute necessity. A prolonged effort to educate and organise the masses of the proletariat becomes particularly important. The combination of illegal and legal organisation raises special problems before the Party. The popularisation and clarification of the experience of the revolution, which the liberals and liquidationist intellectuals are seeking to discredit, are necessary both for theoretical and practical purposes. But the tactical line of the Party—which must be able to take the new conditions into account in its methods and means of struggle—remains unchanged. The correctness of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics, states one of the resolutions of the conference, is confirmed by the experience of the mass struggle in 1905-07. The defeat of the revolution resulting from this first campaign revealed, not that the tasks were wrong, not that the immediate aims were "utopian", not that the methods and means were mistaken, but that the forces were insufficiently prepared, that the revolutionary crisis was insufficiently wide and deep—and Stolypin and Co. are working to widen and deepen it with most praiseworthy zeal! Let the liberals and terrified intellectuals lose heart after the first genuinely mass battle for freedom, let them repeat like cowards: don't go where you have been beaten before, don't tread that fatal path again. The class-conscious proletariat will answer them: the great wars in history, the great problems of revolutions, were solved only by the advanced classes returning to the attack again and again—and they achieved victory after having learned the lessons of defeat. Defeated armies learn well. The revolutionary classes of Russia have been defeated in their first campaign, but the revolutionary situation remains. In new forms and by other

ways, sometimes much more slowly than we would wish, the revolutionary crisis is approaching, coming to a head again. We must carry on with the lengthy work of preparing larger masses for that crisis; this preparation must be more serious, taking account of higher and more concrete tasks; and the more successfully we do this work, the more certain will be our victory in the new struggle. The Russian proletariat can be proud of the fact that in 1905, under its leadership, a nation of slaves for the first time became a million-strong host, an army of the revolution, striking at tsarism. And now the same proletariat will know how to do persistently, staunchly and patiently t.he work of educating and training the new cadres of a still mightier revolutionary force.

As we have said, utilisation of the Duma tribune is an essential element of this work of education and training. The conference resolution on the Duma group indicates to our Party that road which comes nearest—if we are to seek instances in history—to the experience of German Social- Democracy at the time of the Anti-Socialist Law. The illegal Party must know how to use, it must learn how to use, the legal Duma group; it must train up the latter into a Party organisation equal to its tasks. The most mistaken tactics, the most regrettable deviation, from consistent proletarian work, dictated by the conditions of the present period, would be to raise the question of recalling the group from the Duma (there were two "otzovists" at the conference, but they did not raise the question openly), or to refrain from directly and openly criticising its mistakes and from enumerating them in the resolution (as some delegates insisted at the conference). The resolution fully recognises that the group has committed mistakes for which it was not alone to blame, and which were quite similar to the inevitable mistakes

of all our Party organisations. But there are other mistakes—departures from the political line of the Party. Since these departures occurred, since they were made by an organisation openly acting in the name of the whole Party, the Party was bound to declare clearly and definitely that these were deviations. In the history of West-European socialist parties there have been a number of instances of abnormal relations between the parliamentary groups and the Party; to this.day these relations are quite often abnormal in the Latin countries, where the groups do not display sufficient Party spirit. We must from the very outset organise Social-Democratic parliamentarism in Russia on a different basis; we must at once establish team-work in this field—so that every Social-Democratic deputy may really feel that he has the Party behind him, that the Party is deeply concerned over his mistakes and tries to straighten out his path—so that every Party worker may take part in the general Duma work of the Party, learning from the practical Marxist criticism of its steps, feeling it his duty to assist it, and striving to gear the special work of the group to the whole propaganda and agitation activity of the Party.

The conference was the first authoritative meeting of delegates from the biggest Party organisations to discuss the work of the Duma Social-Democratic group during the whole session. And the decision of the conference shows very clearly how our Party will shape its Duma work, how very exacting it will be in this field both to itself and to the group, how undeviatingly and consistently it proposes to work on developing genuinely Social-Democratic parliamentarism.

The question of our attitude to the Duma group has a tactical and an organisational aspect. In the latter respect the resolution

on the Duma group is only the application of our general principles of organisational policy to a particular case, principles laid down by the conference in the resolution giving instructions on the question of organisation. The conference has recorded that two main tendencies exist in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party on this question: one of them throws the weight of emphasis on the illegal Party organisation, the other—which is more or less akin to liquidationism—throws the weight of emphasis on the legal and semi-legal organisations. The point is that the present situation is characterised, as we have already pointed out, by a certain number of Party workers leaving the Party—especially intellectuals, but also some proletarians. The liquidationist trend raises the question as to whether it is the best, the most active elements that are abandoning the Party and choosing the legal organisations as their field of activity, or whether it .is the "vacillating intellectualist and petty-bourgeois elements" that are leaving the Party. Needless to say, by emphatically rejecting and condemning liquidationism, the conference replied that it was the latter elements. The most proletarian elements of the Party, and those elements of the intelligentsia that were most consistent in principle and most Social Democratic, remained true to the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The desertions from the Party mean its purification, they mean getting rid of its least stable element, of its unreliable friends, of its "fellow-travellers" (Mitläufer), who always joined the proletariat for a while and who were recruited from among the petty bourgeoisie or from among the "declassed", i. e., people thrown out of the orbit of some definite class.

From this evaluation of the principle of Party organisation logically follows the line of organisational policy adopt ed by

the conference. To strengthen the illegal Party organisation, to create Party cells in all spheres of work, to set up first of all "entirely Party committees consisting of workers, even if their number be small, in each industrial enterprise", to concentrate the functions of leadership in the hands of leaders of the Social-Democratic movement from among the workers themselves—such is the task today. Need less to say, the task of these cells and committees must be to utilise all the semi-legal and, as far as possible, legal organisations, to maintain "close contact with the masses", and to direct the work in such a way that Social-Democracy responds to all the needs of the masses. Every Party cell and workers' committee must become a "base for agitation, propaganda and practical organising work among the masses", i. e., they must go where the masses go, and try at every step to push the consciousness of the masses in the direction of socialism, to link up every specific question with the general tasks of the proletariat, to transform every act of organisation into one of class consolidation, to win by dint of energy and ideological influence (not by their ranks and titles, of course) the leading role in all the proletarian legal organisations. Even if these cells and commit tees be very small at times, they will be linked together by Party tradition and Party organisation, by a definite class programme; and two or three Social-Democratic members of the Party will thus be able to avoid becoming sub merged in an amorphous legal organisation and to pursue their Party line under all conditions, in all circumstances and in all kinds of situations, to influence their environment in the spirit of the whole Party, and not allow the environment to swallow them up.

Though mass organisations of one type or another may be dissolved, though the legal trade unions may be hounded out

of existence, though every open act of workers' initiative under a regime of counter-revolution may be ruined by the police on one pretext or another—no power on earth can prevent the concentration of masses of workers in a capitalist country, such as Russia has already become. One way or another, legally or semi-legally, openly or covertly, the working class will find its own rallying points; the class- conscious Party Social-Democrats will everywhere and always march in front of the masses, everywhere and always act together in order to influence the masses in the spirit of the Party. And Social-Democracy, which has proved in open revolution that it is the party of the class, the party that succeeded in leading millions in strikes, in the uprising of 1905, as well as in the elections of 1906-07, will now also be able to remain the party of the class, the party of. the masses, the vanguard, which in the hardest times will not lose touch with the bulk of the army, but will be able to help the latter overcome these hard times, consolidate its ranks once more, and train more and more new fighters.

Let the Black-Hundred diehards rejoice and howl inside the Duma and outside it, in the capital and in the remote provinces, let the reaction rage—the ever so wise Mr. Stolypin cannot take a single step without bringing the precariously balancing autocracy nearer its fall, without creating a new tangle of political impossibilities and absurdities, without adding new and fresh forces to the ranks of the proletariat and to the ranks of the revolutionary elements of the peasant masses. A party which succeeds in consolidating itself for persistent work in contact with the masses, a party of the advanced class, which succeeds in organising its vanguard, and which directs its forces in such a way as to influence in a Social-Democratic spirit

every sign of life of the proletariat—such a party will win no matter what happens.

V. I. Lenin

A Caricature of Bolshevism

Supplement to Proletary, No. 44, April 4 (17), 1909

Collected Works, Volume 15, pages 383-394.

We have already given a general appraisal of "otzovism" and "ultimatumism" in Proletary, No. 42.[1] Concerning the resolution of the St. Petersburg otzovists (reprinted in this issue) which served as their platform during the election of delegates to the December Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (and unfortunately was not communicated to Proletary till after the conference) we have to repeat much of what was said there.

This resolution simply teems with fallacious, un-Marxian arguments. Practically every point in it is evidence of the immaturity of its authors' ideas or of their oblivion of the ABC of Social-Democracy. Point 1: "The first stage of the revolution is concluded...." What does that mean? That a stage in social and economic development is concluded? Probably not. The authors have in mind the end of the stage of direct revolutionary struggle of the masses. We must assume that the otzovists mean that, if we are not to impute to them something totally absurd. If that is the case, then they admit that present conditions are unfavourable for the direct revolutionary struggle of the masses. But although compelled by the force of circumstances to admit this, the otzovists are unable to reason out the conclusions that follow, and cannot, therefore, get their arguments to hang together. "Russia... is moving towards a new revolutionary upswing".... Quite right! She is only moving towards an upswing, i. e., there is no upswing yet—that is what this means, both in logic and in grammar! It appears, however,

that this still non-existing upswing is "characterised by a sharp conflict", etc. The result is utter nonsense. The otzovists are incapable of characterising the present. They "characterise" the future, which we are "moving towards", in order to cover up failure to understand the present. For instance, the "pauperised town petty bourgeoisie" jump into the picture from God knows where, and the reference to them is not backed by even an attempt at an analysis. Why the future upswing should be "characterised" by a sharp conflict of pauperised petty bourgeois is not evident at all. Nor does there appear to be any reason why the pauperised town petty bourgeoisie should be brought in just at this moment. Lumpen-proletarians are sometimes distinguished for their sharp conflicts, and sometimes for their amazing instability and inability to fight. The otzovists' ideas are utterly con fused, and we are not surprised that at the conference of the R.S.D.L.P. only two Bundists voted with the two otzovists for the insertion of the reference to the "pauperised town petty bourgeoisie". Our opinion that otzovism is opportunism turned inside out has been magnificently borne out.

With whom will the sharp conflict take place? "With the ruling bloc of the big bourgeoisie and feudalist land lords." And not with the autocracy? The otzovists cannot distinguish absolutism, which is manoeuvring between these two classes, from the direct rule of the two classes; with the absurd result that the struggle against the autocracy drops out of the picture entirely.

"Secret work is going on to organise the forces...." The work of learning the lessons of experience, of digesting new lessons, of accumulating strength may be, and often is, performed in

secret; but the organisation of forces cannot be performed in secret even when all work is driven under ground. In 1901-03 the organisation of forces proceeded illegally, but not secretly. The otzovists are merely repeating scraps of parrot-phrases and garbling them in the process.

Point 2: "The solution of this conflict, in view of the strongly developed class antagonisms in Russia, will assume the form of a revolution".... Class antagonisms in Russia are less strongly developed than in Europe, which is not faced with the task of fighting autocracy. The otzovists fail to see that in trying to broaden their views they are coming closer to their antipodes, the opportunists.

"...a revolution which will lead to an armed uprising...." The otzovists have not yet told us anything distinctly about the object of the struggle, or about the present stage of development of the autocracy; but they make haste to tell us about the means of struggle in order to proclaim themselves "revolutionaries". This is childish, dear comrades, for you are showing us once again that you have learnt by heart scraps of good phrases, without understanding what they mean. The attitude of the revolutionary Social-Democrats towards insurrection was different in 1897, 1901, and in 1905. It was only after January 9, 1905 that they made it a key issue—although Russia, in 1897 and in 1901, was undoubtedly "moving towards upswing", towards a "sharp conflict" and towards "revolution". It is not enough to learn slogans by heart; one must also learn to judge the opportune moment to issue them. To advocate one of the means of struggle at a time when the "upswing" has not begun and "revolution", in the most strict and direct sense of the term, is still a matter of the future (and the otzovists speak of it in the

future: "will assume the form of a revolution") means only to make oneself into a caricature of a revolutionary Social-Democrat. The resolution adopted by the conference speaks of a developing revolutionary crisis and of the aim of the struggle (conquest of power by the revolutionary classes); more than this cannot and should not be said at the present time.

How the mysterious "municipal reforms" got here, and represented as "radical reforms" at that, God only knows. Apparently the otzovists themselves do not know what this means.

Point 3: "In view of this, Social-Democracy as a consistently revolutionary party must put non-parliamentary action in the forefront."...

And yet there are people (the ultimatumists) who are so short-sighted that our disagreements with the otzovists seem to them differences only about practical matters, disagreements over the ways and means of applying a common line of tactics! In the summer of 1907 the disagreement over boycotting the Third Duma might have been regarded merely as a disagreement over methods, and the mistake of the boycottists merely as a mistake in choice of methods in applying tactics with which all Bolsheviks were agreed. Today, in 1909, it is ridiculous even to suggest such a thing. The mistake of the otzovists and ultimatumists has developed into a deviation from the principles of Marxism. Just think: "In view of this", i. e., in view of the fact that we are "moving towards" an upswing, and that the conflict "will assume the form of a revolution", "in view of this" let non-parliamentary action be put in the forefront! Why, comrades, this is merely a jumble of words to cover up a monstrous confusion of ideas! Before you have even said a

word about the Duma in your resolution, you have already concocted the conclusion: "in view of this" ... "non-parliamentary action"! In view of the fact that we do not under stand the importance of the Duma and the tasks of the Party at a time when an upswing is maturing, we proclaim that struggle must be outside the Duma—that is the nonsense that the otzovists' case amounts to. They have repeated, without understanding them, scraps of arguments which the Bolsheviks advanced at a time when non-parliamentary action was not merely being proclaimed, but carried on by the masses; and repeated them at a time when they themselves consider "the first stage of the revolution concluded", i. e., that for the time being the conditions for direct mass action are absent.

They have learned by heart the sound proposition that work in the Duma must be subordinated to the interests and direction of the working-class movement outside the Duma, and repeat scraps of what they have learned irrelevantly, and in a garbled, scarcely recognisable form.

Instead of emphasising the necessity of continuing— in addition to work in the Duma—to devote maximum effort to persistent, prolonged and painstaking organisation and agitation among the masses outside the Duma—the otzovists, in company with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, raise a "revolutionary" yelp about "non-parliamentary action", making an onslaught, and so forth.

"Direct action is impossible at. the present time," say the otzovists at the end of the resolution (Point 1), although at the beginning of it they proclaimed a non-parliamentary struggle. If this is not a caricature of Bolshevism, what is?

"And work to carry the revolution through to complete victory First, the scrap of an idea about the means of struggle, then its object! ... "and for this purpose to organise the proletariat and the broad masses of the peasant ry"....At a time like the present, when the first and foremost task is to strengthen and rebuild the semi-destroyed Party organisations, this is a mere phrase, comrades!

Point 4 is one of the gems of "otzovism". "The Party may employ only such forms of organisational and agitational action as do not obscure or weaken the revolutionary struggle

This, according to the "practical" ultimatumists, is the "practical" way of stating the issue! In 1909 the otzovists are compelled to search for theoretical justification and the quest inevitably bogs them down. "Only such forms of action as do not obscure..."—this is a broad hint at the work of the Social-Democrats in the Duma and at their utilisation of semi-legal and legal organisations. It appears, then, that there are some "forms of action" which obscure and others which do not. In order to save people who are unable to think the trouble of using their brains, let us draw up a list of "forms of action" and cross out those which "obscure"—now that will be real revolutionary tactics!

Take legal literature, for instance, dear comrades. Does this "form of organisational and agitational action" obscure, or does it not? Of course it does, under the Stolypin regime. Then it must be eliminated according to the otzovists, who do not know how to distinguish the conditions in which revolutionary Social-Democrats may resort to the most varied forms of action, and therefore talk nonsense. "The Party must pay special attention to the utilisation and reinforcement of existing

organisations and the formation of new illegal, semi-legal and, where possible, legal organisations that could serve as its strongholds," declares the resolution of the conference, proposed and carried by the Bolsheviks. This resolution is as remote from otzovism as heaven is from earth. "Only such forms as do not obscure"— is just a hollow phrase: a mere "yelp", and not a revolutionary utterance. The formation of illegal Party "workers' committees" to utilise "semi-legal and, where possible, legal organisations"—these are the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democrats who take into account what "forms of organisational and agitational action" are prescribed by the present situation, and who are able to display methods of genuine Social-Democratic activity in the most diverse "forms".

"Down with legal Social-Democratic literature" is a hollow phrase, impracticable and therefore only to the advantage of the opportunists—who are perfectly well aware that it is impracticable. It is difficult to draw a line between Social-Democrats who are ready to answer to the Party for their legal writings and non-Party literary hacks; but it is possible, and it provides a real line of activity for those who want to work with the Party. "Down with the legal Duma group, down with legal organisations"—these are hollow phrases which are only to the advantage of the opportunists who would be glad to rid themselves of Party control. To keep on exercising this control, "utilising" legal organisations, rectifying every mistake and tactical blunder committed by Social-Democrats—this is Party work, which we and all those who wish to carry out the decisions of the conference will continue to do.

The end of Point 4: "strenuously opposing all deals between the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the autocracy."

Ugh! The otzovists will insist on inappropriately repeating scraps of ideas drawn from Bolshevik literature. Really, comrades, you must try to make out what's what! In the period of the First and Second Dumas, the government was still groping its way towards such deals, while the Cadets were recommending deals to the people as slogans of "struggle" (slogans which misled even the Menshevik Social- Democrats). At that time a resolute struggle against any deals was really the slogan of the day, the task of the moment, the exposure of fraud. Today tsarism has found the way to conclude the deal, and has already done so, with those classes which the otzovists themselves refer to as a "bloc"; and moreover no one is deceived by the deal which has been concluded in the Third Duma. To make the task of "strenuously opposing all deals" the pivot of our agitation today means making oneself a caricature of Bolshevism.

Point 5: "Our Duma cannot be regarded as a parliament working in an environment of political liberty, and with a measure of freedom for the class struggle of the proletariat, but is merely a deal between tsarism and the big bourgeoisie".... This contains two mistakes. It is wrong to say "not a parliament but a deal", for quite a number of the world's parliaments are nothing more than a deal between the bourgeoisie (at various stages of development) and various survivals of medievalism. We had to, and did, fight to prevent Russia's first parliament from being a Black-Hundred and Octobrist parliament; but once it became such in spite of our efforts—and history obliged us to pass through this stage—it is childish to try to exorcise this

unpleasant reality with exclamations and declamations. Secondly: according to the authors of the resolution, if there is a "measure of freedom" then it is a "parliament"; if not, it is a "fraud". This is a vulgar—democratic view, worthy of a Cadet but not of a Marxist. Under the Third Duma there is much less freedom than there was under the Second; but the Third Duma is a less fictitious parliament, because it more truly reflects the actual relation between the state authority and the present ruling classes. As long as power is in the hands of the tsar and the feudalist landlords, there can be no other parliament in bourgeois Russia. It might befit Cadets to try to brush this bare truth under the carpet, but not Social-Democrats.

Point 6, by way of an exception, is correct. But this is precisely an exception which proves the reverse rule, because ... because on this point the otzovists are expounding, not their own ideas, but the .ideas of the anti-otzovists who carried the resolutions at the conference.

Conclusions. Point (a) "The Duma being ... a deal ... and a weapon of the counter-revolution" .... Quite right! ... "only serves to bolster up the autocracy".... This "only" is wrong. The autocracy has staved off its downfall by organising such a Duma in time: but it has riot been strengthened thereby, rather on the contrary, advanced in its decay. The Duma, as a "screen", is more effective than many an "exposure", because for the first time, on a thou sand and one issues, it reveals tsarism's dependence on the counter-revolutionary sections of society; it is for the first time demonstrating en grand how close is the alliance between Romanov and Purishkevich, between tsarism and the "Union of the Russian People", between the autocracy and the Dubrovins, the Iliodors and the Polovnyovs.

That the Duma sanctions the crimes of tsarism is beyond doubt; but it is the sanction of particular classes, on be half of particular class interests, and it is the duty of the Social-Democrats precisely to use the Duma rostrum to reveal these instructive truths of the class struggle.

"The eight months' proceedings of the Third Duma have shown that the Social-Democrats cannot make use of it."

Here is the very essence of otzovism, the error of which our "ultimatumists" are only covering up, confusing the issue by their ridiculous equivocation—that since we have spent so much energy on creating a Duma group, we must not recall it lightly!

There is a straightforward question, and evasions won't do: have these eight months' proceedings proved that it is possible to make use of the rostrum of the Duma, or not? The otzovists' reply is wrong. In spite of the immense difficulties involved in Party guidance of the Duma group, it has beyond question proved the possibility of making use of the Duma as a platform. To be daunted by difficulties and mistakes is timidity; it is intellectual "yelping", whereas what we want is patient, consistent and persistent proletarian effort. Other socialist parties in Europe encountered even greater difficulties at the beginning of their parliamentary activity, and made many more mistakes, but they did not shirk their duty. They succeeded in overcoming the difficulties and in correcting their mistakes.

(b) "Our Duma group ... persistently pursuing opportunist tactics, could not and cannot be a staunch and consistent representative of the revolutionary proletariat."

The grandest truths can be vulgarised, otzovist comrades, the noblest aims can be reduced to mere phrase-mongering— and that is what you are doing. You have degraded the fight against opportunism into mere phrase-mongering, and are thereby only playing into the hands of the opportunists. Our Duma group has made and is making mistakes, but by its very work it has proved that it "could and can" staunchly and consistently represent the proletariat—could and can, when we, the Party, guide it, help it, appoint our best men to lead it, draw up directives, and draft speeches, and explain the harmful and fatal effects of taking advice from the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia who, not only in Russia but all over the world, always gain easy access to all kinds of institutions on the parliamentary fringe.

Have the courage to admit, comrades, that we have as yet done far too little to provide this real guidance of the work of the Duma group, to help it with deeds. Have the courage to admit that we can do ten times as much in this direction, if we succeed in strengthening our organisations, consolidating our Party, bringing it closer to the masses, creating Party media exercising a constant influence on large sections of the proletarians. That is what we are working for, that is what everybody must work for who wants to fight opportunism in deeds and not in words.

The otzovists have reduced the struggle against opportunism in the Duma group to a mere phrase. They have learned words by rote without understanding the difference between anarchist and Social-Democratic criticism of opportunism. Take the anarchists. They all pounce on every mistake every Social-Democratic member of parliament makes. They all shout that even Bebel once made a speech in an almost patriotic spirit,

once took up a wrong stand on the agrarian programme, and so on and so forth. True, even Bebel made opportunist mistakes in his parliamentary career. But what does this prove? The anarchists say that it proves that all the workers' M.P.s should be recalled. The anarchists rail at the Social-Democratic members of parliament and re fuse to have anything to do with them, refuse to do anything to develop a proletarian party, a proletarian policy and proletarian members of parliament. And in practice the anarchists' phrase-mongering converts them into the truest accomplices of opportunism, into the reverse side of opportunism.

Social-Democrats draw quite a different conclusion from their mistakes—the conclusion that even Bebel could not become Bebel without prolonged Party work in training up real Social-Democratic representatives. They need not tell us, "We have no Bebels in our group." Bebels are not born. They have to be made. Bebels don't spring fully formed like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, but are created by the Party and the working class. Those who say we have no Bebels don't know the history of the German Party: they don't know that there was a time, under the Anti-Socialist Law, when August Bebel made opportunist blunders and that the Party corrected him, the Party guided Bebel.

(c) "The continued presence of the Social-Democratic group in the Duma ... can only do harm to the interests of the proletariat ... lower the dignity and influence of the Social-Democrats." To show how "quantity passes into quality" in these preposterous exaggerations, and how anarchist phrases grow out of them (irrespective of whether our otzovist comrades, desire it or not), we need only refer to Belousov's speech during the 1909 budget

debate. If such speeches are considered as “harmful”, and not as proof that the rostrum of the Duma can and must be utilised, then our disagreement ceases to be a mere difference of opinion about the character of a speech, and becomes a disagreement concerning, the fundamental principles of Social-Democratic tactics.

(I) “Launch a wide campaign ... for the slogan: 'Down with the Third Duma'"

We have already said in Proletary, No. 39, that this slogan, which for a time appealed to some anti-otzovist workers, is wrong.[3] It is either a Cadet slogan, calling for franchise reform under the autocracy, or a repetition of words learned by rote from the period when liberal Dumas were a screen for counter-revolutionary tsarism, designed to prevent the people from seeing clearly who their real enemy was.

(II) “Recall ... the Duma group; this will emphasise both ... the character of the Duma and the revolutionary tactics of the Social-Democrats."

This is a paraphrase of the proposition advanced by the Moscow otzovists, that the recall of the Duma group will emphasise that the revolution is not dead and buried. Such a conclusion—we repeat the words of Proletary, No. 39, “emphasises” only the burial of those Social-Democrats who are capable of arguing in this way. They bury themselves thereby as Social-Democrats; they lose all feeling for genuine proletarian revolutionary work; and for that reason they are so painfully contorting themselves to “emphasise” their revolutionary phrases.

(III) "Devote all efforts to organisation and preparation for open ... struggle Land therefore renounce open agitation from the rostrum of the Duma! I... and to propaganda", etc., etc.

The otzovists have forgotten that it is unseemly for Social-Democrats to refuse to conduct propaganda from the rostrum of the Duma.

At this point they give us the argument repeated by some ultimatumists, that "there is no sense in wasting energy on hopeless work in the Duma, let us use all our forces more productively". This is not reasoning, but sophistry, which— again irrespective of whether the authors desire it or not— leads to anarchist conclusions. For in all countries the anarchists, pointing to the mistakes committed by Social- Democratic members of parliament, argue that it is "a waste of time to bother with bourgeois parliamentarism" and call for the concentration of "all these forces" on organising "direct action". But this leads to disorganisation and to the shouting of "slogans" which are futile because they are isolated, instead of conducting work in every field on the widest possible scale. It only seems to the otzovists and ultimatumists that their argument is new, and applies only to the Third Duma. But they are wrong. It is a common argument heard all over Europe, and it is not a Social-Democratic argument.

Thus, otzovism and ultimatumism are a caricature of Bolshevism. What gave rise to this caricature? Of course, the fallacies of Bolshevism as a whole, the Menshevik has tens to declare. Such a conclusion, undoubtedly, is very "profitable" for the Mensheviks. Unfortunately for them, however, objective facts do not corroborate, but refute it. The objective facts are that in the development not only of Bolshevism, but of Russian

Marxism in general, there was a period when Marxism was caricatured, and that Russian Marxism grew strong and developed in struggle with these growing pains, pains which accompanied the expansion of its sphere of influence. Russian Marxism was born at the beginning of the eighties of the last century in the works of a group of political emigrants (the Emancipation of Labour group).

But Marxism did not become a trend of Russian social thought and a constituent part of the working-class movement in Russia until the middle of the nineties of the last century, when a "wave" of Marxian literature and of a Social-Democratic working-class movement arose in Russia. And what happened? This wave carried with it a caricature of Marxism in the shape of Struvism on the one hand and Rabocheye Dyelo-ism and Economism on the other. Marxism grew and matured because it did not conceal the disagreements in its ranks, did not play the diplomat (as the Mensheviks do with Maslov, Cherevanin, Kuskova, Prokopovich, Valentinov, Yermansky and Co.), but waged a victorious campaign against the caricature, which had been engendered by the deplorable conditions of Russian life and the turning- point in the historical development of socialism in Russia. And Bolshevism will grow up and become strong, making no attempt to conceal the incipient distortion of its principles by a caricature engendered by the deplorable conditions of Russian life and the turning-point in the counter-revolutionary period, but openly explaining to the masses into what a bog the otzovists and ultimatumists would lead the Duma group and the Party.

V. I. Lenin

The Faction of Supporters of Otzovism and God-Building

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Collected Works, Volume 16, pages 29-61.

Let us begin with otzovism. Our victims of removal sum up the parliamentary or Duma experience of the past years, justify the boycott of the Bulygin and Witte Dumas, as well as the participation in the Second Duma, and continue:

"At a time of acute and increasing reaction all this changes again. The Party cannot then carry out a big and spectacular election campaign, nor obtain worth-while parliamentary representation."

The first phrase with an independent idea not copied from old Bolshevik publications at once reveals to us the abysmal political thoughtlessness of the otzovists. Just reflect for a moment, good souls, at a time of acute and increasing reaction is it possible for the Party to organise in a "big and spectacular" way the "training groups and schools" for boyeviks that you speak about on the very same page, in the very same column of your literary production? Reflect for a moment, good souls, can the Party obtain "worth-while representation" in such schools? If you could think, if you were at all capable of political judgement, 0 you unjustly removed ones, you would see what absolute nonsense you are talking. Instead of thinking politically, you pin your faith to a "spectacular" signboard and so find yourselves in the role of Simple Simons of the Party. You babble about "training schools" and "intensifying [!] propaganda in the armed forces" (ibid.) because, like all the

political, infants in the camp of the otzovists and ultimatumists, you consider such activities to be particularly "spectacular", but you are incapable of thinking about the conditions for applying these forms of activity in practice (and not in words). You have memorised fragments of Bolshevik phrases and slogans but your understanding of them is precisely nil. "At a time of acute and increasing reaction" all work is difficult for the Party, but however great the difficulties, it is still possible to obtain worthwhile parliamentary representation. This is proved too, for instance, by the experience of the German Social-Democrats in a period of "acute and increasing reaction" as during the introduction of the Anti-Socialist Law. By denying this possibility Maximov and Go. only reveal their class political ignorance. To advocate "training schools" and "intensification of propaganda in the armed forces" "at a time of acute and increasing reaction" and at the same time to deny the possibility of the Party having worthwhile parliamentary representation is to utter obvious incongruities which deserve to be published in an anthology of logical absurdities for junior high-school boys. Both training schools and the intensification of propaganda in the armed forces presuppose an inevitable violation, of the old laws, breaking through these, laws, whereas parliamentary activity by no means necessarily, or at any rate much more rarely, presupposes a breach of the old laws by the new social forces. Now reflect, good souls, when is it easier to force a breach of the old laws: at a time of acute and increasing reaction or when the movement is on the upgrade? Reflect, 0 unjustly removed ones, and be ashamed of the nonsense you utter in defending the otzovists, who are so dear to you.

Further. Which activity presupposes a 'wider scope for the energy of the masses, greater influence of the masses on immediate political life—parliamentary activity within the laws framed by' the old regime, or propaganda among the troops, which at one stroke directly undermines this regime's material force? Reflect, good souls, and. you will see that parliamentary activity takes second place in this respect. And what follows from this? It follows that the stronger the immediate movement of the masses, and the greater the scope of their energy, in other words: the more one can speak of an "acute and increasing" revolutionary onslaught of the people and not of "acute and increasing reaction", all the more possible, certain and successful will become both propaganda among the troops and militant actions that are really connected with the mass movement and are not merely the adventurism of unrestrained boyeviks. That, 0 unjustly removed ones, was the reason why Bolshevism could so powerfully develop both militant activities and propaganda among the troops in the period of "acute and increasing" revolutionary upsurge; that was the reason why the Bolsheviks could (beginning from 1907) dissociate, and by 1909 did completely dissociate their group from the boyevism that at a time of "acute and increasing reaction" degenerated, inevitably degenerated, into adventurism.

But with these heroes of ours, who have learned by heart fragments of Bolshevik phrases, it is the other way round. The highest forms of struggle, which have never anywhere in the world succeeded without a direct onslaught of the masses, are put in the forefront and recommended as "feasible" at a time of acute reaction, while the lower forms of struggle, which presuppose not so much a direct breach of the law by mass struggle as utilisation of the law for the purpose of propaganda

and agitation, preparing the minds of the masses for struggle, are declared "unfeasible"!!

The otzovists and their "removed" echoers have heard, and committed to memory, that the Bolsheviks regard direct struggle of the masses, drawing into motion even the troops (i.e., the most obdurate section of the population, the slowest to move and most protected against propaganda, etc.) and converting armed outbreaks into the real beginning of an uprising, as the highest form of the movement, and parliamentary activity without the direct action of the masses as the lowest form of the movement. The otzovists and their echoers, such as Maximov, heard this and learned it by heart, but they did not understand it, and so disgraced themselves. The highest form—that means the. most "spectacular"—thinks the otzovist and Comrade Maximov, Well, then, I'll raise a highly "spectacular" cry, that should pro duce the most revolutionary result of all. As for the meaning of it, that can be left to the devil!

Now listen to some more of Maximov's ideas (we continue the quotation from where we left off):

"The mechanical force of reaction severs the connection of the already existing Party faction with the masses and makes it terribly difficult for the Party to influence them, with the result that this representative body is unable to conduct sufficiently broad and deep organisational and propaganda work in the interests of the Party. If the Party itself is weakened there is not excluded even the danger of degeneration of the faction and its deviation from the main line of Social-Democracy...."

In very truth, isn't that supremely pretty? When it is a matter of the lower, legal forms of struggle they try to frighten us: "the mechanical force of reaction", "unable to conduct sufficiently broad work", "the danger of degeneration". But when it is a matter of the higher forms of the class struggle, which force a breach in the old laws, the "mechanical force of reaction" disappears, there is no "inability" to conduct "sufficiently broad" work among the troops, and the "danger of degeneration" of training groups and schools, please observe, is altogether out of the question!

There you have the best justification of the editorial board of Proletary, why it had to remove political leaders who spread such ideas among the masses.

Get this into your heads, 0 unjustly removed ones: when the conditions of acute and increasing reaction are really present, when the mechanical force of this reaction really severs the connection with the masses, makes sufficiently broad. work difficult and weakens the Party, it is then that the specific task of the Party becomes to master the parliamentary weapon of struggle; and that, 0 unjustly removed ones, is not because parliamentary struggle is higher than any other forms of struggle; no, it is just because it is lower than them, lower, for example, than a struggle which draws into the mass movement even the armed forces, which gives rise to mass strikes, uprisings, etc. Then why does mastery of the lowest form of struggle become the specific (i.e., distinguishing the present moment from other moments) task of the Party? Because the stronger the mechanical force of reaction and, the weaker the connection with the masses, the more immediate becomes the task of preparing the minds of the masses (and not the task of

direct action), the more immediate becomes the task of utilising the methods of propaganda and agitation created by the old regime (and not a direct onslaught of the masses against this old regime).

For any Marxist who has at all pondered over the philosophy of Marx and Engels, for any Social-Democrat who is at all acquainted with the history of the international socialist movement, this conversion of one of the lowest forms of struggle into the specific weapon of struggle of a special historic moment contains nothing surprising. The anarchists have absolutely never been able to understand this simple thing. Now our otzovists and their removed echoers are trying to introduce anarchist modes of thought among Russian Social-Democrats, crying out (like Maximov and Co.) that Proletary is dominated by the theory of "parliamentarism at any price".

To show how stupid and un-Social-Democratic these out cries of Maximov and Co. are, we shall once more have to begin with the ABC. Just reflect, 0 unjustly removed ones, what is the specific difference between the policy and tactics of the German Social-Democrats and those of the socialist workers' parties in other countries? The utilisation of parliamentarism; the conversion of bourgeois Junker (approximate Russian equivalent: Octobrist-Black-Hundred) parliamentarism into an instrument for the socialist education and organisation of the mass of the workers. Does this mean that parliamentarism is the highest form of struggle of the socialist proletariat? Anarchists the world over think it does mean that. Does it mean that the German Social-Democrats stand for parliamentarism at any price? Anarchists the world over think it does mean that, and hence there is no enemy more hateful to them than German

Social-Democracy, there is no target they love to aim at more than the German Social-Democrats. And in Russia, when our Socialist-Revolutionaries begin to flirt with the anarchists and advertise their own "revolutionary militancy" they never fail to drag In real or imaginary errors of the German Social-Democrats, and draw conclusions from them to the detriment of Social-Democracy.

Now let us go further. In what lies the fallacy of the anarchists' argument? It lies in the fact that, owing to their radically incorrect ideas of the course of social development, they are unable to take into account those peculiarities of the concrete political (and economic) situation in different Countries which determine the specific significance of one or another means of struggle for a given period of time. In point of fact the German Social-Democrats, far from standing for parliamentarism at any price, not only do not subordinate everything to parliamentarism, but, on the contrary, in the international army of the proletariat they best of all have developed such extra-parliamentary means of struggle as the socialist press, the trade unions, the systematic use of popular assemblies, the socialist education of youth, and so on and so forth.

What is the point then? The point is that a combination of a number of historic conditions has made parliamentarism a specific weapon of struggle for Germany over a given period, not the chief one, not the highest, not of prime and essential importance in comparison with other forms, but merely specific, the most characteristic in comparison with other countries. Hence, the ability to use parliamentarism has proved to be a symptom (not a condition but a symptom) of exemplary

organisation of the entire socialist movement, in all its branches, which we have enumerated above.

Let us turn from Germany to Russia. Anyone who presumed to draw an exact parallel between the conditions in these two countries would be guilty of a number of gross errors. But try to put the question as a Marxist is bound to do: what is the specific peculiarity of the policy and tactics of the Russian Social-Democrats at the present time? We must preserve and strengthen the illegal Party—just as before the revolution. We must steadily prepare the masses for a new revolutionary crisis—as in the years 1897-1903. We must strengthen to the utmost the Party's ties with the masses, develop and utilise all kinds of workers' organisations for the furtherance of the socialist cause, as has always been the practice of all Social-Democratic parties. The specific peculiarity of the moment is, namely, that. the old autocracy is making an attempt (an unsuccessful attempt) to solve new historic problems with the help of the Octobrist-Black-Hundred Duma. Hence, the specific tactical task of the Social-Democrats is to use this Duma for their own purposes, for spreading the ideas of revolution and socialism. The point is not that this specific task is particularly lofty, that it opens grand vistas, or that it equals or even approaches in importance the tasks which faced the proletariat in, say, the period of 1905–06. No. The point is that it is a special feature of the tactics of the present moment, marking its distinction from the period that is past or from that which is yet to come (for this coming period will certainly bring us specific tasks, more complex, more lofty, more interesting than that of utilising the Third Duma). We cannot be equal to the present situation, we cannot solve the, whole assemblage of problems with which it confronts the Social-Democratic Party, unless we

solve this specific problem of the moment, unless we convert the Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma into an instrument for Social-Democratic propaganda.

The otzovist windbags, taking their cue from the Bolsheviks, talk, for instance, of taking account of the experience of the revolution. But they do not understand what they are talking about. They do not understand that taking account of the experience of the revolution includes defending the ideals and aims and methods of the revolution from inside the Duma. If we do not know how to defend these ideals aims and methods from inside the Duma, through our working-class Party members who might enter and those who have already entered, this Duma, it means that we are unable to make the first step towards, politically taking account of the experience of the revolution (for,what we are concerned with here is of course not a theoretical summing up of experience in books and researches). Our task is by no means ended by this first step. Incomparably more important than the first step will be the second and third steps, i.e., the conversion of the experience already gained by the masses into ideological stock-in-trade for new historic action. But if these otzovist windbags themselves speak of an "inter-revolutionary" period they should have understood (if they were able to think and reason things out in a Social-Democratic way) that "inter-revolutionary" signifies precisely that elementary, preliminary tasks come on the order of the day. "Inter-revolutionary" denotes an unsettled, indefinite situation when the old regime has become convinced that it is impossible to rule with the old instruments alone and tries to use a new instrument within the general framework of the old institutions. This is an internally contradictory, futile attempt, in which the autocracy is once more going towards

inevitable failure, is once more leading us to a repetition of the glorious period and glorious battles of 1905. But it is going not in the same way as in 1897-1903, it is leading the people to revolution not in the same way as before 1905. It is this "not in the same way" that we must be able to understand; we must be able to modify our tactics, supplementing all the basic, general, primary and cardinal tasks of revolutionary Social-Democracy by one more task, not very ambitious, but a specific task of the present new period: the task of utilising the Black-Hundred Duma in a revolutionary Social-Democratic way.

Like any new task it seems more difficult than the others, because it requires of people not a simple repetition of slogans learned by heart (beyond which Maximov and the otzovists are mentally bankrupt), but a certain amount of initiative, flexibility of mind, resourcefulness and independent work on a novel historical task. But in actual fact this task can appear particularly difficult only to people who are incapable of independent thought and independent effort: actually this task, like every specific task of a given moment, is easier than others because its solvability is determined entirely by the conditions of the given moment. In a period of "acute, and increasing reaction" to solve the problem of organising "training schools and groups" in a really serious way, i.e., one that really connects them with the mass movement, that really subordinates them to it, is quite impossible, for it is a task set stupidly by people who have copied the formulation of it from a good pamphlet, which was based on the conditions of a different period. But to solve the problem of subordinating the speeches, actions and policy of the Social-Democrats in the Third Duma to the mass party and the interests of the masses is possible. It is not easy, compared with the "easy" matter, of repeating things learned

by heart, but it can be done. However we exert all the forces of the Party now, we cannot solve the problem of a Social-Democratic (and not anarchist) organisation of "training schools" at the present "inter-revolutionary" moment, for the solution of this problem requires altogether different historical conditions. On the contrary, by exerting all our forces we shall solve (and we are already beginning to solve), the problem of utilising the Third Duma in a revolutionary Social-Democratic way. And we shall do so, 0 you otzovists and ultimatumists wronged by removal and the harshness of God, not in order to put parliamentarism on some high pedestal, not to proclaim "parliamentarism at any price", but in order, after the solution of the "inter-revolutionary" problem, corresponding to the present "inter-revolutionary" period, to proceed to the solution of loftier revolutionary problems, which will correspond to the higher, i.e., more revolutionary period of tomorrow.

These stupid outcries of Maximov and Co. about the Bolsheviks' standing for "parliamentarism at any price", sound particularly queer in view of the actual history of otzovism. What is queer is that the shout about exaggerated parliamentarism should come from the very people who have developed and are developing a special trend exclusively over the question of their attitude to parliamentarism! What do you call yourselves, dear Maximov and Co.? You Call yourselves "otzovists", "ultimatumists", "boycottists". Maximov to this day is so proud of being a boycottist of the Third Duma that he can't get over it, and his rare Party utterances are invariably accompanied by the signature: "Reporter on behalf of the boycottists at the July Conference of 1907." One writer in olden times used to sign himself: "Substantive state councillor and

cavalier," Maximov signs himself: "Reporter on behalf of the boycottists"—he, too, is a cavalier; you see!

In the political situation of June 1907, when Maximov advocated the boycott, the mistake was still quite a small one. But when Maximov comes out in July 1909 with a manifesto of sorts and persists in admiring his "boycottism" in regard to the Third Duma, it is downright stupidity. Boycottism, otzovism and ultimatumism—all these expressions in themselves imply the formation of a trend over the question of the attitude to parliamentarism and exclusively over this question. To make a separate stand on this question, to persist (two years after the Party has settled it in principle!) in this separate stand, is a sign of unparalleled narrow-mindedness. It is just those who behave in this way, i.e., the "boycottists" (of 1909) and the otzovists and the ultimatumists, who prove thereby that they do not think like Social-Democrats, that they are putting parliamentarism on a special pedestal, that exactly like the anarchists they make a trend out of isolated formulas: boycott that Duma, recall your men from that Duma, present an ultimatum to that group in the Duma. To act like that is to be a Caricature of a Bolshevik. Among Bolsheviks the trend is determined by their common attitude to the Russian revolution and the Bolsheviks have emphatically declared a thousand times (as it were to forewarn political infants) that to identify Bolshevism with boycottism or boyevism is a stupid distortion and vulgarisation of the views of revolutionary Social-Democracy. Our view that Social-Democratic participation in the Third Duma is obligatory, for instance, follows inevitably from our attitude to the present moment,' to the attempts of the autocracy to take a step forward along the path of creating a bourgeois monarchy, to the significance of the Duma as an organisation of counter

revolutionary classes in a representative institution on a national scale. Just as the anarchists display an inverted parliamentary cretinism when they separate the question of parliament from the whole question of bourgeois society in general and try to create a trend from outcries against bourgeois parliamentarism (although criticism of bourgeois parliamentarism is in principle on the same level as criticism of the bourgeois press, bourgeois syndicalism and so forth), so our otzovists, ultimatumists and boycottists, in exactly the same way, display inverted Menshevism when they form a separate trend on the question of the attitude to the Duma, on the question of methods of combating deviations on the part of the Social-Democratic group in the Duma (and not the deviations of bourgeois literati, who come into the Social-Democratic movement incidentally, and so on).

The climax of this inverted parliamentary cretinism is reached in the famous argument of the leader of the Moscow otzovists whom Maximov is shielding: the recall of the Duma group should serve to emphasise that the revolution is not dead and buried! And Maximov with pure and unruffled brow does not hesitate to declare publicly: "the otzovists have never (of course, never!) expressed anti-parliamentary sentiments at all."

This shielding of the otzovists by Maximov and Co. is one of the most characteristic features of the new faction and we must dwell on it in all the more detail because the unenlightened public is all too often taken in by our bitterly complaining removed ones. It consists firstly in the fact that Maximov and Co. are forever beating their breasts and protesting: we are not otzovists, we do not share the opinions of the otzovists at all! Secondly, Maximov and Co. accuse the Bolsheviks of

exaggerating the fight against the otzovists. It is an exact repetition of the story of the attitude of the Rabocheye Dyelo-ists (in the years 1897-1901) to the adherents of Rabochaya Mysl. "We are not Economists,{3} cried the Rabocheye Dyelo-ists, beating their breasts, "we do not share the views of Rabochaya Mysl, we are carrying on a controversy with them (in just the same way as Maximov carried on a 'controversy' with the otzovists!), it is only those wicked Iskrists who have brought a false charge against us, slandered us, 'exaggerated' Economism, etc., etc." Thus among the supporters of Rabochaya Mysl—frank and honest Economists—there were not a few people who had genuinely gone astray, who had the courage of their convictions, whom it was impossible not to respect—while the Rabocheye Dyelo clique abroad specialised in definite intrigues, in covering up their tracks, in playing hide-and-seek and deceiving the public. The consistent and declared otzovists (like Vsev, and Stan, who are well known in Party circles) stand in exactly the same relation to Maximov's clique abroad.

We are not otzovists, cry the members of this clique. But make any of them say a few words about the contemporary political situation and the tasks, of the Party and you will hear in full all the otzovist arguments, slightly watered down (as we have seen in the case of Maximov) by Jesuitical reservations, additions, suppressions, mitigations, confusions, etc. Your Jesuitry, 0 unjustly removed ones, cannot acquit you of the charge of otzovist stupidity, but aggravates your guilt tenfold, for an ideological confusion that is concealed is a hundred times more corrupting to the proletariat, a hundred times more harmful to the Party.

We are not otzovists, cry Maximov and Co. Yet after June 1908, when he resigned from the small editorial board of Proletary, Maximov formed an official opposition inside the collegium, demanded and obtained freedom of discussion for this opposition, demanded and obtained special representation for the opposition in the organisation's chief executive bodies responsible for the circulation of the newspaper. It goes without saying that ever since that time, i.e., for over a year all the otzovists have been in the ranks of this opposition, have jointly organised an agency in Russia, have jointly adapted the school abroad (of which more below) for the purposes of an agency, and so on and so forth.

We are not otzovists—cry Maximov and Go. Yet at the All-Russian Party Conference in December 1908, when the more honest otzovists of this opposition came out before the whole Party as a separate group, as a specific ideological trend, and, as such, received the right to put forward their spokesman (the Conference had decided that only separate ideological trends or separate organisations—time being short—could be represented by a separate spokesman), the spokesman from the otzovist faction—by sheer accident! sheer accident!—was Comrade Maximov....

This deception of the Party by harbouring Otzovism is systematically pursued by Maximov's group abroad. In May 1908 otzovism suffered defeat in open battle: it was outvoted by 18 to 14 at the general city conference in Moscow (in July 1907, in this district almost all the Social-Democrats without exception were boycottists but, unlike Maximov, by June 1908 they had the sense to understand that it would be unpardonable stupidity to insist on "boycotting" the Third, Duma). After this,

Comrade Maximov organised abroad an official opposition to Proletary and began a controversy in the columns of the Bolshevik periodical, something which had never been practised before. Finally, in the autumn of 1908 when the whole St. Petersburg organisation divided into otzovists and non-zovists (the term coined by the workers) during the election of delegates to the All-Russian Conference, when discussions were held in all districts and subdistricts of St. Petersburg, not on the platform of Bolsheviks versus Mensheviks but on that of otzovists versus non-zovists, the otzovists hid their platform from the eyes of the public. It was not communicated to Proletary. It was not released for the press. It was not communicated to the Party at the All-Russian Conference of December 1908. Only after the Conference, on the insistent demand of the editorial board, was it communicated to us and we printed it in Proletary No. 44. ("Resolution of the St. Petersburg Otzovists".)

A well-known otzovist leader in Moscow Region "edited" an article by an otzovist worker, which was published in Rabocheye Znamya No. 5, but we have still not received this leader's own platform. We know perfectly well that in the spring of 1909 when the regional conference of the Central Industrial Region was in preparation the otzovist leader's platform was being read and passed from hand to hand. We know from the reports of Bolsheviks that there were incomparably more gems of un-Social-Democratic thought in this platform than in the St. Petersburg platform. But we were never supplied with the text of the platform, probably for reasons just as accidental, purely accidental, as those which caused Maximov to address the conference as the spokesman of the otzovist faction.

The question of utilising legal opportunities, too, Maximov and Co. covered up by a "smooth" phrase: "It is taken for granted." It would be interesting to know if "it is taken for granted" now also by the practical leaders of the Maximov faction, Comrade Lyadov and Stanislav, who only three months ago caused a resolution to be passed in the Regional Bureau of the Central Industrial Region, which was then in their hands (the same Regional Bureau which endorsed the famous "school"; the membership of this Bureau has changed since), against Social-Democratic participation in the congress of factory doctors.{7} As we know this was the first congress at which the, revolutionary Social-Democrats were in the majority. Yet all the prominent otzovists and ultimatumists campaigned against participation in this congress, declaring that it would be "treason to the cause of the proletariat" to take part. in it. And Maximov covers up his tracks—"it is taken for granted". We may "take it for granted" that the franker .otzovists and ultimatumists are openly disrupting practical work in Russia, while Maximov and Co. who are hankering for the laurels of Krichevsky and Martynov,{8} obscure the point at issue: there are no differences of opinion, no one is opposed to the idea of utilising legal opportunities.

The restoration of the Party bodies abroad, the foreign groups for the organisation of connections, etc., leads inevitably to a repetition of the old abuses which must be combated most relentlessly. It is a complete repetition of the history of the Economists, who in Russia carried on a campaign against political action while they sheltered themselves abroad behind Rabocheye Dyelo. It is a complete repetition of the history of the bourgeois-democratic "Credo" (Credo—a symbol of faith), which was advocated in Russia by Prokopovich and Co. and

was made public in the revolutionary Social-Democratic press against the will of the authors. Nothing could have a more demoralising influence on the Party than this game of hide-and-seek, this exploitation of the onerous conditions of illegal work to hold things back from Party publicity, this Jesuitry of Maximov and Co., who, while operating wholly and in every respect hand in glove with the otzovists, in print beat their breasts and declare that all this business of otzovism is a deliberate exaggeration on the part of Proletary.

We are not pettifoggers, we are not formalists, but revolutionaries. What matters to us is not the verbal distinctions which might be drawn between otzovism, ultimatumism, and "boycottism" (of the Third Duma), but the actual content of Social-Democratic propaganda and agitation. And if views which have nothing in common with Bolshevism nor with Social-Democracy in general are being propagated in illegal Russian circles under the mask of Bolshevism, those persons who are hindering a full exposure of these views and a full explanation of their falsity before the whole Party are acting as enemies of the proletariat.

These people have also disclosed themselves on the question of god-building. The enlarged editorial board of Proletary adopted and published two resolutions on this question: one on the principle involved, the other with special reference to Maximov's protest. The question arises, what does this same Maximov say now in his "Report"? He Writes his "Report" in order to cover up his tracks, exactly in the style of the diplomat who said that language was given to man so as to hide his thoughts.{1} We are told that "wrong information" is being

spread about the "so-called god-building" trend of Maximov's clique, and that is all.

"Wrong information" do you say? Oh no, my dear fellow, it is just because you know perfectly well that the "information" in Proletary on god-building is absolutely correct that you have been covering up the tracks. You know perfectly well that this "information", as is stated in the published resolution, refers primarily to the literary productions emanating from your literary clique. These literary productions are very exactly specified in our resolution; one thing alone being omitted, which could not be added in the resolution, namely, that for about a year and a half the strongest resentment against the "god-building" of your confrères has been expressed in leading Bolshevik circles, and it is on these grounds (besides those stated above) that the new faction of caricature Bolsheviks has been poisoning for us, by means of evasions, artifices, pin-pricks, objections and quibbles, every opportunity of working. One of the most notable of these quibbles is particularly well known to Maximov because it was a protest in writing lodged in due form with the editors of Proletary against the publication of an article entitled "Our Ways Part" (Proletary No. 42). Perhaps this too is "wrong information", 0 unjustly removed ones? Perhaps this too was only a "so-called protest"?

No, let me tell you that the policy of covering up tracks does not always succeed and you will never succeed with it in our Party. It is no use playing hide-and-seek and by putting on airs trying to make a secret of something which everybody knows who takes an interest in Russian literature and Russian Social-Democracy. There is a literary clique who, with the help of several bourgeois publishers, are flooding our legal literature

with systematic propaganda of god-building. Maximov too belongs to this clique. This propaganda has become systematic precisely in the past eighteen months, when the Russian bourgeoisie for its counter-revolutionary purposes felt a need to revive religion, increase the demand for religion, invent religion, inoculate the people with religion or strengthen the hold of religion on them in new forms. Hence the preaching of god-building has acquired a social, political character. Just as the bourgeois press in the period of the revolution fondled and petted the most zealous of the Mensheviks for their pro-Cadetism, so in the period of counter-revolution the bourgeois press is fondling and petting the god-builders in the ranks—it is no joke!—in the ranks of the Marxists and even in the ranks of the "also-Bolsheviks". And when the official organ of Bolshevism stated in an editorial that Bolshevism had nothing in common with such propaganda (this statement was issued in the press after endless persuasion in letters and personal conversations had failed to stop this disgraceful propaganda), Comrade Maximov lodged a formal, written protest with the editorial board of Proletary. He, Maximov, had been elected by the London Congress,{2} hence his "acquired right" was being violated by those who dared to officially repudiate the disgraceful doctrine of god-building. "Why, is our faction in bondage to the god-building literati?" This was the remark that Comrade Marat{3} let slip during a stormy scene in the editorial office—yes, yes, the very same Comrade Marat, who is so modest., so well-meaning, so peaceable and so good-hearted that he cannot properly decide to this very day whether to go with the Bolsheviks or the godly otzovists.

Or is this perhaps also a piece of "wrong information", 0 unjustly removed Maximov? There is no clique of god-building

literati, you never defended them, you never pro tested against the article "Our Ways Part"? eh?

Of "wrong information" on the god-building trend Comrade Maximov speaks in his "Report" concerning the school abroad which is being held by the new faction. Comrade Maximov is so emphatic about this being "the first [Maximov's italics] Party school to be held abroad" and is so bent on misleading the, public on this question, that we. shall have to speak of the notorious "school" in greater detail.

Comrade Maximov bitterly complains:

"Not a single attempt, not only to lend support to the school but even to take control over it, was made by the editorial board (of Proletary); while spreading false information about the school derived from unknown sources, the editorial board did not address a single enquiry to the organisers of the school to verify this information. Such was the attitude of the editorial board to the whole affair."

So. So. "Not a single attempt even to take control over the school."... In this phrase Maximov's Jesuitry goes so far that it exposes itself.

Remember, reader, Yerogin's hostel in the period of the First Duma. A retired rural superintendent (or some bureaucratic knight of the same nature) Yerogin opened a hostel in St. Petersburg for peasant deputies coming in from the country, his desire being to lend support to the "plans of the government". The inexperienced peasants on arriving in the capital were intercepted by Yerogin's agents and directed to Yerogin's hostel, where, of course, they found a school in which the heretical doctrines of the "Lefts" were refuted, in which the

Trudoviks, etc., were covered with obloquy, and in which the new-fledged Duma members were schooled in "true Russian" statecraft. Fortunately, since the State Duma was held in St. Petersburg it was in St. Petersburg that Yerogin had to organise his hostel, and as St. Petersburg is a centre with a fair breadth and freedom of ideological and political life Yerogin's deputies, of course, very soon began to desert Yerogin's hostel and transfer to the camp of the Trudoviks or the independent deputies. Thus, Yerogin's little intrigue resulted only in disgrace, both for himself and the government.

Now imagine, reader, that a Yerogin hostel like this is organised, not in some foreign St. Petersburg, but in some foreign equivalent of Tsarevokokshaisk.{4} If you grant this hypothesis, you will have to agree that the otzovist god-building Yerogins have used their knowledge of Europe to prove themselves more cunning than the true-blue Russian Yerogin. People calling themselves Bolsheviks set up an exchequer of their own—independent of what, as far as we know, is the one and only general Bolshevik exchequer, out of which comes the cost of publishing and circulating Proletary—organised an agency of their own, shipped some of "their" agitators to Tsarevokokshaisk, sent out there some Workers belonging to the Social-Democratic Party and pro claimed this (hidden away from the Party in Tsarevokokshaisk) Yerogin hostel the "first Party" (party, because it is hidden from the Party) "school abroad".

He hasten to make the reservation—since the removed Comrade Maximov has so vigorously raised the question whether his removal was regular or irregular (of this, later)—that there is nothing at all "irregular" in the actions of the

otzovist-god-building Yerogins. Nothing whatsoever. Everything there is quite regular. It is quite regular for kindred spirits in a party to form a group together. It is quite regular for these kindred spirits to collect a fund and start some joint enterprise of propaganda and agitation. It is quite regular that in this instance they should wish to choose as the form of their enterprise, say, not a newspaper, but a "school". It is quite regular that they should consider it an official Party affair, so long as it is organised by members of the Party and so long as there is a Party organisation, no matter which, assuming political and ideological responsibility for the enterprise. Everything is quite regular here and everything would be quite all right if ... if there were no Jesuitry, no hypocrisy, no deception of your own Party.

Is it not a deception of the Party if you publicly emphasise that the school is a Party affair, i.e., if you restrict yourself to the question of its formal legitimacy and do not give the names of the initiators and organisers of the school, i.e., you keep silent about the ideological and political trend of the school as the undertaking of a new faction in out Party? There have been two "documents" about this school in the possession of the editors of Proletary (for over a year now relations between the editorial board and Maximov have been carried on entirely through the medium of "documents" and diplomatic notes). The first document bore no signature, nobody's signature at all. It was merely an abstract statement of the virtue of education and the educational value of institutions called schools. The second document was signed by figure-heads. Now, coming out in print before the public with praise of the "first Party school abroad" Comrade Maximov, as before, keeps silent about the factional character of the school.

This policy of Jesuitry is harmful to the Party. We shall expose this "policy". The initiators and organisers of the school are in actual fact Comrades "Er"{5} (thus we will name the leader the Moscow otzovists well known to all Party members, who delivered lectures on the school, organised a circle of pupils and was appointed to the roster of lecturers by several workers' circles), Maximov, Lunacharsky, Lyadov, Alexinsky and so on and so forth. We do not know and we are not interested in knowing what particular part was played by one or other. of the above-mentioned comrades, what places they occupy in the various official institutions of the school, in its "Council", "executive commission", collegium of lecturers, eta. We do not know which "non-factional" comrades might supplement this clique in one or another particular case. All this is quite unimportant. What we assert is that the actual ideological and political trend of this school, as a new factional centre, is determined precisely by the names enumerated and that by concealing this from the Party Maximov is conducting a policy of Jesuitry. What is bad is not that a new factional centre has come into being in the Party—we by no means belong to the class of people who are not averse to making a little political capital out of cheap and fashionable outcries against factionalism—on the contrary, it is a good thing that a distinctive shade of opinion, once it exists, should be able to have its special expression in the Party. What is bad is the deception of the Party and the workers who—naturally—sympathise with the idea of any school, as they do with any educational undertaking.

Is it not hypocrisy when Comrade Maximov complains to the public that the editorial board of Proletary had not "even" ("even!") the desire "to take control over the school"? Only

think: in June 1908 Comrade Maximov left the small editorial board of Proletary; since that time internal strife has gone on almost continuously in a thousand different forms in the Bolshevik group; Alexinsky abroad, "Er" and Co. abroad and in Russia, repeat after Maximov all the arrant nonsense of the otzovists and god-builders against Proletary in a thousand different tones. Maximov lodges written and formal protests against the article "Our Ways Part"; everybody who knows anything of Party affairs if only by hearsay speaks of a coming inevitable split in the ranks of the Bolsheviks (it suffices to point out that the Menshevik Dan at the All-Russian Conference of December 1908 declared for all to hear, at an official gathering: "Who does not know that the Bolsheviks are now accusing Lenin of betraying Bolshevism"!)—yet Comrade Maximov, playing the role of an innocent, absolutely innocent, child, asks the honourable public, why is it that the editorial board of Proletary did not "even" want to take control over a Party school in god-building Tsarevokokshaisk? "Control" over the school! Supporters of Proletary in the capacity of "inspectors", sitting in at the lectures of Maximov, Lunacharsky, Alexinsky and Co.!! Come now, why do you play this unbecoming, this disgraceful farce? For what purpose? Why throw dust in the eyes of the public by circulating meaningless "programmes" and "reports" of the "school" instead of admitting frankly and openly who are the ideological leaders and inspirers of the new factional centre!

For what purpose?—we shall answer this question presently, but first let us finish with the question of the school: There is room for Tsarevokokshaisk in St. Petersburg and it can be transferred (most of it, anyway) to St. Petersburg, but St. Petersburg can neither be accommodated in nor transferred to

Tsarevokokshaisk. The more energetic and in dependent of the students at the new Party school will manage to find their way from the narrow new faction to the broad Party, from the "science" of the otzovists and god-builders to the science of Social-Democracy in general and Bolshevism in particular. As for those who prefer to limit themselves to a Yerogin education, nothing can be done with them. The editorial board of Proletary is prepared' to give and will give every possible assistance to all workers, whatever their views, if they want to migrate (or travel) from the foreign Tsarevokokshaisk to the foreign St. Petersburg and acquaint themselves with Bolshevik views. The hypocritical policy of the organisers and initiators of the "first Party school abroad", however, we shall expose before the whole Party.

What is the purpose of all this hypocrisy of Maximov's, we asked, and deferred our reply until we had finished talking about the school. But, strictly speaking, the question to be cleared up here is not "for what purpose", but "why?" It would be wrong to think that all the members of the new faction are conducting a hypocritical policy deliberately for a definite purpose. No. The fact is that in the very situation of this faction, in the conditions in which it has appeared and is active, there are causes (which many otzovists and god-builders are not conscious of) that give rise to a hypocritical policy.

There is an old saying to the effect that hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue. But this saying refers to the sphere of personal ethics. As applied to ideological and political trends it must be said that hypocrisy is the screen adopted by groups that are internally not homogeneous, that are made up of

assorted elements, accidentally thrown together, who feel that they are too weak for open, straight forward action.

The composition of the new faction is the determining factor that made it adopt this screen. The general staff of the faction of godly otzovists consists of unrecognised philosophers, ridiculed god-builders, otzovists convicted of anarchistic nonsense and reckless revolutionary phrase-mongering, muddled ultimatumists and, lastly, those boyeviks (fortunately few in the Bolshevik faction) who considered it below their dignity to come down from the outwardly showy and "spectacular" to obscure, modest revolutionary Social-Democratic work corresponding to the conditions and tasks of the "inter-revolutionary" period, and on whom Maximov bestows honours by his "spectacular" phrases about training schools and groups ... in 1909. The only thing that holds these diverse elements so strongly together at the present moment is—a burning hatred to Proletary, a hatred it has quite properly incurred, because not a single attempt by these elements to obtain self-expression in Proletary, or even indirect recognition or the slightest defence and condonation, has ever failed to encounter the most strenuous opposition.

"Abandon hope for ever"—that was what Proletary told these elements in every issue, at every meeting of the editorial board, in every declaration on every Party question of the day.

And when (due to the objective conditions of the development of our revolution and the counter-revolution in our country) it came about that god-building and the theoretical foundations of Marxism became the questions of the day in the literary sphere, and the utilisation of the Third Duma and of the Third Duma platform by the Social-Democratic Party in the sphere of

political work, these elements rallied together and the natural and inevitable explosion took place.

Like any explosion it was instantaneous, not in the sense that there had been previously no signs of such tendencies, or isolated manifestations of them, but in the sense that the political fusion of diverse tendencies, including some very remote from politics, took place almost in a flash. Hence the general public, as always, is inclined to be satisfied primarily with a philistine explanation of the new split, one imputing it to the bad qualities of one or another of the leaders, the influence of life abroad, parochialism and so on and so forth. There is no doubt that the location abroad, which, due to objective conditions, became the inevitable base of operations of all the central revolutionary organisations, has left its imprint on the form of the split. There is no doubt that its form was also affected by the idiosyncrasies of the literary circle one wing of which came into the Social-Democratic movement. What we call a philistine explanation is not one that takes note of these circumstances, which can explain nothing but the form, the occasions and the "external history" of the split, but one that is based on refusal or incapacity to understand the ideological and political foundations, causes and roots of the divergence.

The new faction's failure to understand these foundations is also the reason why it has resorted to the old method of camouflage, covering up tracks, denying the inseparable connection with otzovism, etc. The failure to understand these foundations causes the new faction to speculate on a philistine explanation of the split and on philistine sympathy.

What indeed is it but speculation on philistine sympathy to weep publicly about being "ousted" and "removed" as

Maximov and Co. are doing now? Bestow the charity of your sympathy, for Christ's sake, on the ousted, the unjustly removed ones.... That this is a method counting with infallible certainty on philistine sympathy is proved by the curious fact that even Comrade Plekhanov, the enemy of all god-building, all "new" philosophy, all otzovism and ultimatumism, etc., even Comrade Plekhanov bestowed his mite of sympathy for Christ's sake, taking advantage of Maximov's whining, and over and over again called the Bolsheviks "stiff-necked" in this connection (see Plekhanov's Dnevnik Sotsial-Demokrata, August 1909). If Maximov has even managed to extract a mite of sympathy from Plekhanov, you can imagine, reader, what tears of sympathy for Maximov will be shed by the philistine elements inside and on the fringe of the Social-Democratic movement over the "ousting" and "removal" of the virtuous, well-meaning and modest otzovists and god-builders.

The question of this "ousting" and "removal" is treated by Comrade Maximov both from its formal aspect and with regard to the essence of the matter. Let us examine this treatment.

From the formal point of view the removal of Maximov was "irregular", say the removed ones, and "we do not recognise this removal", for, Maximov was "elected by the Bolshevik congress, i.e., the Bolshevik section of the Party Congress". Reading Maximov and Nikolayev's leaflet, the public sees a grave accusation ("irregular removal") without being given either an exact formulation of it or material from which to judge the matter. But that is the invariable method of a certain side during splits abroad: to obscure the divergence of principle, to draw a veil over it, to keep silent about the ideological dissensions, to conceal their ideological friends, and to make as

much noise as possible about organisational conflicts, which the public is not in a position to analyse exactly and has not the right to sort out in detail. That was how the Rabocheye Dyeloists behaved in 1899, with their outcry that, there was no Economism in any shape or form, but that Plekhanov had stolen the press. That was how the Mensheviks behaved in 1903 with their outcry that they had made no turn whatsoever to Rabocheye Dyelo-ism but that Lenin had "ousted" or "removed" Potresov, Axelrod and Zasulich, etc. That is the behaviour of people who are speculating on elements abroad who are fond of rows and sensations. There is no otzovism, nor any god-building, but there is the "irregular removal" of Maximov "by the majority of the editorial board", who want to "leave at their full disposal" "the property of the whole faction" — come into the shop, gentlemen, we will tell you some thing most spicy about this business....

An old device, Comrades Maximov and Nikolayev! And the politicians who resort to it are bound to break their necks.

Our "victims of removal" talk of "irregularity" because in their opinion the editorial board of Proletary has no right to decide the question of the fate of the Bolshevik faction and of the split in its ranks. Very well, gentlemen. If the editorial board of Proletary and the 15 Bolshevik members and candidate members of the Central Committee elected at the London Congress have not the right to represent the Bolshevik faction you have every opportunity to make a public declaration to that effect and conduct a campaign for the overthrow of these undesirable representatives or for new elections to replace them. But you have indeed conducted such a campaign and only after you had met with a certain number of reverses did

you prefer to complain and whine. If you raised the question of a congress or conference of Bolsheviks, Comrades Maximov and Nikolayev, then why did you not tell the public that several months ago Comrade "Er" submitted a draft resolution to the Moscow Committee calling for a vote of no confidence in Proletary and the holding of a Bolshevik conference to elect a new ideological centre for the Bolsheviks?

Why did you keep silent about this, 0 wrongly removed ones?

Why did you keep silent about the fact that "Er's" resolution was rejected by every vote except his own?

Why did you keep silent about the fact that in the autumn of 1908 in the whole St. Petersburg organisation from top to bottom a struggle was going on over the platforms of the two trends of Bolshevism, the otzovists and the opponents of otzovism, and that the otzovists were defeated?

Maximov and Nikolayev want to whine to the public be cause they have been repeatedly defeated in Russia. Both "Er" and the St. Petersburg otzovists had the right to wage a struggle against Bolshevism, in the highest down to the lowest organisations, without waiting for any conference and without making public their platforms before the whole Party.

But had not the Proletary editorial board, which declared open war on otzovism from June 1908, the right after a year of strife, a year of controversy, a year of friction, conflict, etc., after it had invited three regional delegates from Russia and consulted several Russian members of the enlarged editorial board, who had not taken part in a single conflict abroad, had it not the right to declare what was a matter of fact, to declare that Maximov had split away from the board, to declare that Bolshevism bas

nothing in common with otzovism, ultimatumism and god-building?

Stop this hypocrisy, gentlemen! You fought on what you thought was your strongest ground and you suffered defeat. You went preaching otzovism to the masses in spite of a decision of the official centre of the Bolsheviks and without waiting for a special conference. And now you start whining and complaining because you found yourselves in a ludicrously small minority on the enlarged editorial board, at the conference held with the participation of regional delegates!

Here again we have a device of Russians abroad exactly after the manner of Rabocheye Dyelo: playing at "democracy" when the conditions for complete democracy are absent, speculating on the inflammation of all kinds of discontent "abroad" and at the same time transmitting from abroad (through the "school") your otzovist and god-building propaganda—starting a split among the Bolsheviks, and after wards moaning about a split—forming a private faction (under cover of a "school") and shedding crocodile tears over the "splitting" policy of Proletary.

No, this squabble has gone on long enough! A faction is a free union of kindred minds within a party and after over a year of strife both in Russia and abroad we had a perfect right, we had the duty, to make a definite decision. And we have done so. You have a perfect right to oppose it, to put forward your platform and try to win a majority for it. If you do not do so, if instead of forming an open alliance with the otzovists and putting forward a common platform you persist in playing hide-and-seek and speculating on a cheap "democracy" abroad, you will get nothing in return but the contempt you deserve.

You are playing a double game. On the one hand, you declare that for a whole year Proletary has been "wholly" pursuing a non-Bolshevik policy (and your supporters in Russia have tried more than once to gain acceptance for these views in resolutions of the St. Petersburg Committee and the Moscow Committee). On the other hand, you bewail the split and refuse to recognise the "removal". On the one hand, you are in fact hand in glove with the otzovists and god-builders, on the other you repudiate them and pose as peacemakers who want to make peace between the Bolsheviks and the otzovists and god-builders.

"Abandon hope for ever!" You can try to win a majority. You can gain what victories you like among immature Bolshevik members. We shall not agree to any reconciliation. Form your faction, or rather: go on forming it, since you have already begun, but do not try to deceive the Party, do not try to deceive the Bolsheviks. All the conferences and congresses in the world are powerless now to reconcile the Bolsheviks with the otzovists, the ultimatumists and the god-builders. We have said and we repeat it once again: every Bolshevik Social-Democrat and every class-conscious worker must make his fixed and final choice.

Concealing their ideological kin, afraid to declare their real platform, the new faction is trying to fill up the gaps in its ideological stock-in-trade by borrowing words from the vocabulary of old splits. The "new Proletary", the new Proletary line", shout Maximov and Nikolayev imitating the fight against the new Iskra in the old days. It is a trick that might beguile certain political infants, But you are not even capable of repeating old words, gentlemen. The "point" of the slogan "against the new Iskra" was that when the Mensheviks took

over Iskra. they themselves had to start a new line of policy, whereas the Congress (the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903) had endorsed the line of the old Iskra. The "point" was that the Mensheviks (through the mouth of Trotsky in 1903-04) had to declare: the old Iskra and the new are poles apart. And to this day Potresov and Co. are trying to remove from themselves the "traces" of the period when they were guided by the old Iskra.

Proletary is now in its 47th issue. The first came out exactly three years ago, in August 1906. In this first issue of Proletary, dated August 21, 1906, we find an editorial article "The Boycott" and it states in black and white: "The time has now come when the revolutionary Social-Democrats must cease to be boycottists."{1} Since that time there has not been a single issue of Proletary containing even one line of print in favour of "boycottism" (after 1906), otzovism and ultimatumism, without a refutation of this caricature of Bolshevism. And now the caricature Bolsheviks are getting on stilts and trying to compare themselves with those who first fought the three-year campaign of the old Iskra and secured the endorsement of its line by the Second Party Congress and then exposed the volte-face of the new Iskra!

Comrade Maximov now signs himself "Former editor of the popular workers' newspaper Vperyod", wanting to remind the reader that it was said "geese saved Rome". "Your relation to the policy of Vperyod,"{2} we tell Maximov in reply to this reminder, was exactly the same as Potresov's relation to the old Iskra. Potresov was its editor, but he did not lead the old Iskra, the old Iskra led him. As soon as he sought to change the policy the supporters of the old Iskra turned their backs on him. And

now even Potresov himself is making frantic efforts to blot out the "sin of his youth", his participation in the editorship of the old Iskra.

Maximov did not lead Vperyod, but Vperyod led him. Proof: the policy of boycotting the Third Duma, in support of which Vperyod did not and could not say a single word. Maximov acted very wisely and well when he allowed him self to be led by Vperyod. Now he has begun to think up (or, what tomes to the same thing, to help the otzovists to think up) a line of policy that is inevitably leading him into the morass, just like Potresov.

Remember this, Comrade Maximov: the basis one should take for comparison is the integrity of an ideological and political trend, not "words" and "slogans", which some people learn by heart without understanding their meaning. Bolshevism ran the old Iskra for three. years, from 1900 to 1903, and emerged as an integral trend for the struggle with Menshevism. The Mensheviks persisted for a long time in their new alliance with the anti-Iskrists and the supporters of Rabocheye Dyelo until finally they surrendered Potresov (and only Potresov?) to Prokopovich. The Bolsheviks ran the "old" Proletary (1906-09) in a spirit of resolute opposition to "boycottism", etc., and emerged as an integral trend for the struggle against those who are now thinking up "otzovism", "ultimatumism", "god—building", etc. The Mensheviks wanted to reform the old Iskra in the spirit of Martynov and the Economists, and they broke their necks in the attempt. You want to reform the old Proletary in the spirit of "Er", the otzovists and the god-builders—and you will break your necks too.

But what about the "turn towards. Plekhanov", says Maximov triumphantly? What about the formation 91 a "new Centrist

faction"? And our "also-Bolshevik" describes as "diplomacy" a "denial" that "the realisation of the idea of a 'centrist group' is being contemplated!"

These cries which Maximov is uttering against "diplomacy" and "uniting with Plekhanov" are simply laughable. Here, too, the caricature Bolsheviks are true to themselves: they have firmly learned by heart that Plekhanov pursued an ultra-opportunist policy in 1906-07. And they think that if they repeat it rather frequently, without bothering to analyse the changes that are taking place, this will denote the maximum degree of "revolutionary spirit".

The fact of the matter is that starting from the London Congress the "diplomats" of Proletary always openly pursued and succeeded in carrying out a pro-Party policy against the grotesque exaggerations of factionalism, a policy of defending Marxism against anti-Marxist criticism. There are two reasons for Maximov's present outcries: on the one hand, ever since the London Congress there have always been individual Bolsheviks (Alexinsky is an example) alleging that a policy of "conciliation", a "Polish-Lettish" policy, etc., has been substituted for a policy of Bolshevism. These stupid allegations, which were merely evidence of bigoted thinking, were seldom taken seriously by the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, the literary clique to which Maximov belongs and which has never at any time had more than one foot in the Social-Democratic movement, has for a long time regarded Plekhanov as the chief enemy of their god-building and suchlike tendencies. In the eyes of this clique nothing is more terrible than Plekhanov. Nothing is more destructive to their hope of inculcating their ideas into the workers' party than "uniting with Plekhanov".

And now these two elements: bigoted factionalism with its incomprehension of the tasks of the Bolshevik faction in forming the Party, and the god-builders of the literary circles and apologists of god-building, have come together on the "platform": against "union with Plekhanov", against the "conciliatory", "Polish-Lettish" policy of Proletary, etc.

Plekhanov's Dnevnik No. 9, which is now out, makes it unnecessary for us to explain to the reader in special detail what a caricature this "platform" of the caricature Bolsheviks is. Plekhanov exposed the liquidationism of Golos Sotsial-Demokrata, the diplomacy of its editors and declared that his "way parted" with Potresov, who had ceased to be a revolutionary. It is clear now to every Social-Democrat that working-class Mensheviks will go with Plekhanov against Potresov. It should be clear to everyone that the split among the Mensheviks vindicates the policy of the Bolsheviks. It is clear to everyone that Plekhanov's declaration of the pro-Party line of policy against the splitting tactics of the liquidators is a tremendous victory for Bolshevism, which now holds the predominant position in the Party.

Bolshevism has won this tremendous victory because it pursued its pro-Party policy in spite of the outcries of the immature "Lefts" and god-building literati. Only such people as these can be afraid of a rapprochement with the Plekhanov who exposes and expels the Potresovs from the workers' party. Only in the stagnant bog of the god-builders' circle or of the heroes of phrases learned by heart is there any chance of success for a "platform": "Against union with Plekhanov", that is to say, against rapprochement with the pro-Party Mensheviks for the struggle against liquidationism, against rapprochement

with the orthodox Marxists (which is disadvantageous to the clique of literary Yerogins), against the winning of further Party support for revolutionary Social-Democratic policy and tactics.

We Bolsheviks can point to great achievements in winning such support. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Kautsky—Social-Democrats who often write for Russians and to that extent are in our Party—have been won over to our point of view, although at the beginning of the split (i903) their sympathies were entirely with the Mensheviks. They were won over because the Bolsheviks made no concessions to "criticism" of Marxism, because the Bolsheviks upheld, not the letter of their own, definitely their own. factional theory, but the general spirit and meaning of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics. We shall continue to advance along this path, we shall wage an even more relentless war against pedantic stupidity and reckless phrase-mongering with phrases learned by heart, against the theoretical revisionism of the god-building circle of literati.

Two liquidationist trends have now quite clearly materialised among the Russian Social-Democrats: Potresov' s and Maximov's. Potresov is necessarily afraid of the Social-Democratic Party because henceforth there is no hope of his line being adopted by it. Maximov is necessarily afraid of the Social-Democratic Party because there is now no hope of his line being adopted by it. Both the one and the other will support and shield by fair means or by foul the escapades of the separate literary circles with their peculiar forms of revision of Marxism. Both the one and the other will clutch, as the last shadow of hope, at the preservation of the circle spirit against the Party spirit, for Potresov can still win occasional victories in a select

company of bigoted Mensheviks, Maximov can still gain an occasional laurel wreath from circles of especially bigoted Bolsheviks, but neither the one nor the other Will ever obtain a firm footing whether among Marxists or in a really Social-Democratic workers' party. They represent two opposite, but mutually complementary, equally limited, petty-bourgeois trends in the Social-Democratic movement.

We have shown what the general staff of the new faction is like. Where can its army be recruited from? From the bourgeois-democratic elements who attached themselves to the workers' party during the revolution. The proletariat everywhere is constantly being recruited from the petty bourgeoisie, is everywhere constantly connected with it through thousands of transitional stages, boundaries and gradations. When a workers' party grows very quickly (as ours did in 1905-06) its penetration by a mass of elements imbued with a petty-bourgeois spirit is inevitable. And there is nothing bad about that. The historic task of the proletariat is to assimilate, re-school, re-educate all the elements of the old society that the latter bequeaths it in the shape of offshoots of the petty bourgeoisie. But the proletariat must re-educate these newcomers and influence them, not be influenced by them. Of the "Social-Democrats of the days of freedom", who first became Social-Democrats in the days of enthusiasm and celebration, the days of clarion slogans, the days of proletarian victories which turned the heads of even purely bourgeois intellectuals, very many began to study in earnest, to study Marxism and to learn persistent proletarian work—they will always.remain Social-Democrats and Marxists. Others did not, succeed in gaining, or wore incapable of gaining, anything from the proletarian party but a few texts and "striking" slogans

learned by heart, a few phrases about "boycottism", "boyevism", and so forth. When such elements thought to foist their "theories", their world outlook, i.e., their short-sighted views, on the workers' party, a split with them became inevitable.

The fate of the boycottists of the Third Duma is an obvious example that admirably . shows the difference between the two elements.

The majority of the Bolsheviks, sincerely carried away by the desire for a direct and immediate fight against the heroes of June 3, were inclined to boycott the Third Duma,, but were very soon able to cope with the new situation. They did not go repeating words learned by heart but attentively studied the new historical conditions, pondered over the question why events had gone that way and not otherwise, worked with their heads, not merely with their tongues, carried out serious and persistent proletarian work, and they very quickly realised the utter stupidity, the utter paltriness of otzovism. Others clutched at words, began to concoct "their own line" from half-digested phrases, to shout about "boycottism, otzovism, ultimatumism", to substitute these cries for the proletarian revolutionary work which the given historical conditions dictated, and to collect a new faction from all sorts of immature elements in the ranks of Bolshevism. Good riddance to you, my friends? We have done every thing we could to teach you Marxism and Social-Democratic work. Now we declare the most ruthless and irreconcilable war on the liquidators, both of the Right and of the Left, who are corrupting the workers' party by theoretical revisionism and petty-bourgeois methods of policy and tactics.

The years of revival (1910–14)

Lenin - To: MAXIM GORKY, January 3, 1911

Dear A. M.,

I have long been intending to reply to your letter but intensification of the squabbling here (a hundred thousand devils take it!) distracted me.

But I should like to have a chat with you.

First of all, before I forget: Tria has been arrested together with Jordania and Ramishvili. It is reported as being true. A pity, for he is a good chap. A revolutionary.

Regarding Sovremennik. In Rech today I read the contents of the first issue and I am cursing and swearing. Vodovozov on Muromtsev ... Kolosov on Mikhailovsky, Lopatin "Not ours", etc. You can't help swearing. And here are you, teasing as it were: "realism, democracy, activity".

Do you think these are good words? They are bad words, used by all the bourgeois tricksters in the world, from the Cadets and S.R.s in our country to Briand or Millerand here, Lloyd George in Britain, etc. The words are bad, turgid, and they carry a S.R.-Cadet message. It's not good.

As regards Tolstoy, I fully share your opinion that hypocrites and rogues will make a saint of him. Plekhanov, too, was infuriated by all the lying and sycophancy around Tolstoy, and in here we see eye to eye. He criticises Nasha Zarya for it in the C.O. (the next issue),[3] and I am doing so in Mysls (No. 1 arrived today. Congratulate us on our own little journal in Moscow, a Marxist one. This has been a happy day for us).

Zvezda No. 1. (it appeared on December 16 in St. Petersburg) also contains a good article by Plekhanov with a trivial comment, for which we have already scolded the editors. It was probably concocted by that ninny Yordansky, together with Bonch! But how come Sovremennik to combat the "legend about Tolstoy and his religion". Is it Vodovozov with Lopatin? You must be joking.

That they have started hitting out at the students is, in my opinion, comforting, but Tolstoy must not be allowed to get away with either "passivism" or anarchism or Narodism or religion.

As regards quixotism in the international policy of Social-Democracy, I think, you are wrong. It is the revisionists who have long been asserting that colonial policy is progressive, that it implants capitalism and that therefore it is senseless to "accuse it of greed and cruelty", for "without these qualities" capitalism is "hamstrung".

It would be quixotism and whining if Social-Democrats were to tell the workers that there could be salvation somewhere apart from the development of capitalism, not through the development of capitalism. But we do not say this. We say: capital devours you, will devour the Persians, will devour everyone and go on devouring until you overthrow it. That is the truth. And we do not forget to add: except through the growth of capitalism there is no guarantee of victory over it.

Marxists do not defend a single reactionary measure, such as banning trusts, restricting trade, etc. But to each his own. Let Khomyakov and Co. build railways across Persia, let them send Lyakhovs,[4] but the job of the Marxists is to expose them to the

workers. If it devours, say the Marxists, if it strangles, fight back.

Resistance to colonial policy and international plunder by means of organising the proletariat, by means of defending freedom for the proletarian struggle, does not retard the development of capitalism but accelerates it, forcing it to resort to more civilised, technically higher methods of capitalism. There is capitalism and capitalism. There is Black-Hundred-Octobrist capitalism and Narodnik ("realistic, democratic", full of "activity") capitalism. The more we expose capitalism before the workers for its "greed and cruelty", the more difficult is it for capitalism of the first order to persist, the more surely is it bound to pass into capitalism of the second order. And this just suits us, this just suits the proletariat.

You think I have fallen into a contradiction? In the beginning of the letter I considered the words "realism, democracy, activity" bad words, and now I find them good? There is no contradiction here; what is bad for the proletariat is good for the bourgeois.

The Germans have an exemplary journal of the opportunists: Sozialistische Monatshefte. There gentlemen like Schippel and Bernstein have long been attacking the international policy of the revolutionary Social-Democrats by raising an outcry that this policy resembles the "lamentations of compassionate" people. That, brother, is a trick of opportunist swindlers. Ask for this journal to be sent to you from Naples and have their articles translated if you are interested in international politics. You probably have such opportunists in Italy too, only there are no Marxists in Italy, that's what makes her so nasty.

The International proletariat is pressing capitalism in two ways: by converting Octobrist capitalism into democratic capitalism and, because it drives Octobrist capitalism away from itself, by transplanting this capitalism to the savages. This, however, enlarges the basis of capitalism and brings its death nearer. There is practically no Octobrist capitalism left in Western Europe; practically all capitalism is democratic. Octobrist capitalism has gone from Britain and France to Russia and Asia. The Russian revolution and the revolutions in Asia=the struggle for ousting Octobrist capitalism and replacing it by democratic capitalism. And democratic capitalism=the last of its kind. It has no next stage to go on to. The next stage is its death.

What do you think of Zvezda and Mysl? The former is dull, in my opinion. But the latter is all ours and I am delighted with it. I'm afraid they'll soon close it down, though.

I was wondering whether you could arrange for my book on the agrarian question to go to Znaniye. Talk it over with Pyatnitsky. I just can't find a publisher, not for love or money.

Reading your postscript: "my hands are shaking and freezing" makes me indignant. What wretched houses you have on Capri! It's a disgrace, really! Even we here have central heating; and your "hands are freezing". You must revolt.

All the very best.

Yours, Lenin

I have received from Bologna an invitation to come to the school there (20 workers). I have turned it down. I don't want to have anything to do with the Vperyodists. We're trying again to get the workers to come here.

V. I. Lenin

Two Utopias

October 1912

In politics utopia is a wish that can never come true—neither now nor afterwards, a wish that is not based on social forces and is not supported by the growth and development of political, class forces.

The less freedom there is in a country, the scantier the manifestations of open class struggle an4 the lower the educational level of the masses, the more easily political utopias usually arise and the longer they persist.

In modern Russia, two kinds of political utopia have been most persistent and they exert a certain influence on the masses owing to their appeal. They are the liberal utopia and the Narodnik utopia.

The liberal utopia alleges that one could bring about appreciable improvements in Russia, in her political liberty, and in the condition of the mass of her working people, peacefully and harmoniously, without hurting any one's feelings, without removing the Purishkeviches, without a ruthless class struggle fought to a finish. It is the utopia of peace between a free Russia and the Purishkeviches.

The Narodnik utopia is a dream of the Narodnik intellectuals and Trudovik peasants who imagine that a new and just division of the land could abolish the power and rule of capital and do away with wage slavery, or that a "just", "equalised" division of the land could be maintained under the domination

of capital, under the rule of money, under commodity production.

What is it that gives rise to these utopias? Why do they persist rather strongly in present-day Russia?

They are engendered by the interests of the classes which are waging a struggle against the old order, serfdom, lack of rights—in a word, "against the Purishkeviches", and which do not occupy an independent position in this struggle. Utopia, or day-dreaming, is a product of this lack of independence, this weakness. Day-dreaming is the lot of the weak.

The liberal bourgeoisie in general, and the liberal-bourgeois intelligentsia in particular, cannot but strive for liberty and legality, since without these the domination of the bourgeoisie is incomplete, is neither undivided nor guaranteed. But the bourgeoisie is more afraid of the movement of the masses than of reaction. Hence the striking, incredible weakness of the liberals in politics, their absolute impotence. Hence the endless series of equivocations, falsehoods, hypocrisies and cowardly evasions in the entire policy of the liberals, who have to play at democracy to win the support of the masses but at the same time are deeply anti-democratic, deeply hostile to the movement of the masses, to their initiative, their way of "storming heaven", as Marx once described one of the mass movements in Europe in the last century.

The utopia of liberalism is a utopia of impotence in the matter of the political emancipation of Russia, a utopia of the self-interested moneybags who want "peacefully" to share privileges with the Purishkeviches and pass off this noble desire as the theory of "peaceful" victory for Russian democracy. The

liberal utopia means day-dreaming about how to beat the Purishkeviches without defeating them, how to break them without, hurting them. Clearly, this utopia is harmful not only because it is a utopia, but also because it corrupts the democratic consciousness of the masses. If they believe in this utopia, the masses will never win freedom; they are not worthy of freedom; they fully deserve to be maltreated by the Purishkeviches.

The utopia of the Narodniks and Trudoviks is the day dreaming of the petty proprietor, who stands midway between the capitalist and the wage-worker, about abolishing wage slavery without a class struggle. When the issue of economic emancipation becomes as close, immediate and burning for Russia as the issue of political emancipation is today, the utopia of the Narodniks will prove no less harmful than that of the liberals.

But Russia is still in the period of her bourgeois and not proletarian transformation; it is not the question of the economic emancipation of the proletariat that has most completely matured, but the question of political liberty, i.e. (in effect), of complete bourgeois liberty.

And in this latter question, the Narodnik utopia plays a peculiar historical role. Being a utopia in regard to the economic consequences that a new division of the land should (and would) have, it is an accompaniment and symptom of the great, mass democratic upsurge of the peasant masses, i.e., the masses that constitute the majority of the population in bourgeois-feudal, modern, Russia. (In a purely bourgeois Russia, as in purely bourgeois Europe, the peasantry will not form the majority of the population.)

The liberal utopia corrupts the democratic consciousness of the masses. The Narodnik utopia, which corrupts their socialist consciousness, is an accompaniment, a symptom, and in part even an expression of their democratic upsurge.

The dialectics of history is such that the Narodniks and the Trudoviks propose and promote, as an anti-capitalist remedy, a highly consistent and thoroughgoing capitalist measure with regard to the agrarian question in Russia. An "equalised" new division of the land is utopian, yet a most complete rupture—a rupture indispensable for a new division—with the whole of the old landownership, whether landlord, allotment or "crown", is the most necessary, economically progressive and, for a state like Russia, most urgent measure towards bourgeois democracy.

We should remember Engels's notable dictum:

"What formally may be economically incorrect, may all the same be correct from the point of view of world history".

Engels advanced this profound thesis in connection with utopian socialism: that socialism was "fallacious" in the formal economic sense. That socialism was "fallacious" when it declared surplus value an injustice from the point of view of the laws of exchange. The theoreticians of bourgeois political economy were right, in objecting to that socialism, in the formal economic sense, for surplus value results from the laws of exchange quite "naturally", quite "justly".

But utopian socialism was right from the point of view of world history, for it was a symptom, an expression, a harbinger of the class which, born of capitalism, has by now, in the beginning of

the twentieth century, become a mass force which can put an end to capitalism and is irresistibly advancing to this goal.

Engels's profound thesis must be borne in mind when appraising the present-day Narodnik or Trudovik utopia in Russia (perhaps not only in Russia but in a number of Asiatic countries going through bourgeois revolutions in the twentieth century).

Narodnik democracy, while fallacious from the formal economic point of view, is correct from the historical point of view; this democracy, while fallacious as a socialist utopia, is correct in terms of the peculiar, historically conditioned democratic struggle of the peasant masses which is an inseparable element of the bourgeois transformation and a condition for its complete victory.

The liberal utopia discourages the peasant masses from fighting. The Narodnik utopia expresses their aspiration to fight, and promises them a million blessings in the event of victory, while this victory will in fact yield them only a hundred blessings. But is it not natural that the millions who are marching to battle, who for ages have lived in unheard-of ignorance, want, poverty, squalor, abandonment and downtroddenness, should magnify tenfold the fruits of an eventual victory?

The liberal utopia is a veil for the self-seeking desire of the new exploiters to share in the privileges of the old exploiters. The Narodnik utopia is an expression of the aspiration of the toiling millions of the petty bourgeoisie to put an end altogether to the old, feudal exploiters, but it also expresses the false hope that the new, capitalist exploiters can be abolished along with them.

Clearly, the Marxists, who are hostile to all and every utopia, must uphold the independence of the class which can fight feudalism with supreme devotion precisely because it is not even one-hundredth part involved in property owner ship which makes the bourgeoisie a half-hearted opponent, and often an ally, of the feudal lords. The peasants are involved in small commodity production; given a favour able conjuncture of historical circumstances, they can achieve the most complete abolition of feudalism, but they will always—inevitably and not accidentally—show a certain vacillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between liberalism and Marxism.

Clearly, the Marxists must carefully extract the sound and valuable kernel of the sincere, resolute, militant democracy of the peasant masses from the husk of Narodnik utopias.

In the old Marxist literature of the eighties one can discover systematic effort to extract this valuable democratic kernel. Someday historians will study this effort systematically and trace its connection with what in the first decade of the twentieth century came to be called "Bolshevism".

Lenin,

The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx

Pravda No. 50, March 1, 1913

this doctrine since it was expounded by Marx?

Marx first advanced it in 1844. The Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, published in 1848, gave an integral and systematic exposition of this doctrine, an exposition which has remained the best to this day. Since then world history has clearly been divided into three main periods: (1) from the revolution of 1848 to the Paris Commune (1871); (2) from the Paris Commune to the Russian revolution (1905); (3) since the Russian revolution.

Let us see what has been the destiny of Marx's doctrine in each of these periods.

I

At the beginning of the first period Marx's doctrine by no means dominated. It was only one of the very numerous groups or trends of socialism. The forms of socialism that did dominate were in the main akin to our Narodism: in comprehension of the materialist basis of historical movement, inability to single out the role and significance of each class in capitalist society, concealment of the bourgeois nature of democratic reforms under diverse, quasi-socialist phrases about the "people", "justice", "right", and so on.

The revolution of 1848 struck a deadly blow at all these vociferous, motley and ostentatious forms of pre-Marxian socialism. In all countries, the revolution revealed the various

classes of society in action. The shooting of the workers by the republican bourgeoisie in Paris in the June days of 1848 finally revealed that the proletariat alone was socialist by nature. The liberal bourgeoisie dreaded the independence of this class a hundred times more than it did any kind of reaction. The craven liberals grovelled before reaction. The peasantry were content with the abolition of the survivals of feudalism and joined the supporters of order, wavering but occasionally between workers' democracy and bourgeois liberalism. All doctrines of non-class socialism and non-class politics proved to be sheer nonsense.

The Paris Commune (1871) completed this development of bourgeois changes; the republic, i.e., the form of political organisation in which class relations appear in their most unconcealed form, owed its consolidation solely to the heroism of the proletariat.

In all the other European countries, a more tangled and less complete development led to the same result—a bourgeois society that had taken definite shape. Towards the end of the first period (1848–71), a period of storms and revolutions, pre-Marxian socialism was dead. Independent proletarian parties came into being: the First International (1864–72) and the German Social-Democratic Party.

II

The second period (1872–1904) was distinguished from the first by its "peaceful" character, by the absence of revolutions. The West had finished with bourgeois revolutions. The East had not yet risen to them.

The West entered a phase of "peaceful" preparations for the changes to come. Socialist parties, basically proletarian, were formed everywhere, and learned to use bourgeois parliamentarism and to found their own daily press, their educational institutions, their trade unions and their co-operative societies. Marx's doctrine gained a complete victory and began to spread. The selection and mustering of the forces of the proletariat and its preparation for the coming battles made slow but steady progress.

The dialectics of history were such that the theoretical victory of Marxism compelled its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists. Liberalism, rotten within, tried to revive itself in the form of socialist opportunism. They interpreted the period of preparing the forces for great battles as renunciation of these battles. Improvement of the conditions of the slaves to fight against wage slavery they took to mean the sale by the slaves of their right to liberty for a few pence. They cravenly preached "social peace" (i.e., peace with the slave-owners), renunciation of the class struggle, etc. They had very many adherents among socialist members of parliament, various officials of the working-class movement, and the "sympathising" intelligentsia.

III

However, the opportunists had scarcely congratulated themselves on "social peace" and on the non-necessity of storms under "democracy" when a new source of great world storms opened up in Asia. The Russian revolution was followed by revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China. It is in this era of storms and their "repercussions" in Europe that we are now living. No matter what the fate of the great Chinese republic,

against which various "civilised" hyenas are now whetting their teeth, no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia or wipe out the heroic democracy of the masses in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries.

Certain people who were inattentive to the conditions for preparing and developing the mass struggle were driven to despair and to anarchism by the lengthy delays in the decisive struggle against capitalism in Europe. We can now see how short-sighted and faint-hearted this anarchist despair is.

The fact that Asia, with its population of eight hundred million, has been drawn into the struggle for these same European ideals should inspire us with optimism and not despair.

The Asiatic revolutions have again shown us the spinelessness and baseness of liberalism, the exceptional importance of the independence of the democratic masses, and the pronounced demarcation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of all kinds. After the experience both of Europe and Asia, anyone who speaks of non-class politics and non-class socialism, ought simply to be put in a cage and exhibited alongside the Australian kangaroo or something like that.

After Asia, Europe has also begun to stir, although not in the Asiatic way. The "peaceful" period of 1872–1904 has passed, never to return. The high cost of living and the tyranny of the trusts are leading to an unprecedented sharpening of the economic struggle, which has set into movement even the British workers who have been most corrupted by liberalism. We, see a political crisis brewing even in the most "diehard", bourgeois-Junker country, Germany. The frenzied arming and the policy of imperialism are turning modern Europe into a

"social peace" which is more like a gunpowder barrel. Meanwhile the decay of all the bourgeois parties and the maturing of the proletariat are making steady progress.

Since the appearance of Marxism, each of the three great periods of world history has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat, in the coming period of history.

Report of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. to the Brussels Conference and Instructions to the C.C. Delegation

Lenin

June 23–30 (July 6–13), 1914

Collected Works, Vol. 20, pages 495-535.

Before proceeding to the report on behalf of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, I shall first of all take this opportunity of performing a pleasant duty, and on behalf of that body express profound thanks to Comrade Vandervelde, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau, for visiting our country and making himself personally acquainted with the leaders of the working-class movement in St. Petersburg. We are particularly grateful to Comrade Vandervelde for being the first to establish direct contact between prominent members of the International and the class-conscious and leading workers of Russia, and also for publishing in the foreign socialist press (we have in mind Le Peuple and l'Hutmanité) objective data on the working-class movement in Russia, data collected on the spot from the editors of the newspapers of the three trends, namely the Pravdist (i. e., our Party), the liquidationist and the Socialist-Revolutionary trends.

I shall divide my report on the question of the unity of the Russian Social-Democratic movement into the following four parts: (1) first, I shall explain the gist of the main differences among the Social-Democrats; (2) I shall then quote data concerning the mass working-class movement in Russia, showing how our Party line has been tested by the experience of this movement; (3) I shall explain how the line and position

of our opponents have been tested by the same experience. Fourth and last, I shall formulate, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, concrete, positive and practical proposals for unity.

I

There are two bodies of opinion on what is at present taking place in the Russian Social-Democratic movement.

One opinion, expounded by Rosa Luxemburg in the proposal she made to the International Socialist Bureau last year (December 1913) and shared by the liquidators and the groups which support them, is as follows: in Russia the "chaos" of factional strife reigns among a multitude of factions, the worst of which, namely, the Leninist faction, is most active in fomenting a split. Actually, the differences do not preclude the possibility of joint activities. The road to unity lies through agreement or compromise among all trends and groups.

The other opinion, which we hold, is that there is nothing resembling "chaos of factional strife" in Russia. The only thing we have there is a struggle against the liquidators, and it is only in the course of this struggle that a genuinely workers' Social-Democratic Party is being built up, which has already united theoverwhelming majority—four-fifths—of the class-conscious workers of Russia. The illegal Party, in which the majority of the workers of Russia are organised, has been represented by the following conferences: the January Conference of 1912, the February Conference of 1913, and the Summer Conference of 1913. The legal organ of the Party is the newspaper Pravda (Vérité), hence the name Pravdist. Incidentally, this opinion was expressed by the St. Petersburg worker who, at a banquet

in St. Petersburg which Comrade Vandervelde attended, stated that the workers in the factories of St. Petersburg are united, and that outside of this unity of the workers there are only "general staffs without armies".

In the second part of my report I shall deal with the objective data which prove that ours is the correct opinion. And now I shall deal with the substance of liquidationism.

The liquidationist groups were formally expelled from the Party at the R.S.D.L.P. Conference in January 1912, but the question of liquidationism was raised by our Party much earlier. A definite official resolution, binding upon the whole Party and unreservedly condemning liquidationism, was adopted by the All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. held as far back as December 1908. In this resolution liquidationism is defined as follows:

(Liquidationism is) "an attempt on the part of some of the Party intelligentsia to liquidate the existing organisation of the R.S.D.L.P. and to substitute for it an amorphous federation acting at all cost within the limits of legality, even at the cost of openly abandoning the programme, tactics and traditions of the Party".

From this it is evident that as far back as 1908 liquidationism was officially declared and recognised as an intellectualist trend, and that in substance it stood for the renunciation of the illegal Party and the substitution, or advocacy of the substitution, of a legal party for it.

The Central Committee's plenary meeting held in January 1910 once again unanimously condemned liquidationism as "a

manifestation of the influence of the bourgeoisie on the proletariat".

From this we see how mistaken is the opinion that our differences with the liquidators are no deeper and are less important than those between the so-called radicals and moderates in Western Europe. There is not a single—literally not a single—West-European party that has ever had occasion to adopt a general party decision against people who desired to dissolve the party and to substitute a new one for it!

Nowhere in Western Europe has there ever been, nor can there ever be, a question of whether it is permissible to bear the title of party member and at the same time advocate the dissolution of that party, to argue that the party is use less and unnecessary, and that another party be substituted for it. Nowhere in Western Europe does the question concern the very existence of the party as it does with us, i. e., whether that party is to be or not to be.

This is not disagreement over a question of organisation, of how the party should be built, but disagreement concerning the very existence of the party. Here, conciliation, agreement and compromise are totally out of the question.

We could not have built up our Party (to the extent of four-fifths) and cannot continue to build it otherwise than by relentlessly fighting those publicists who in the legal press fight against the "underground" (i.e., the illegal Party), declare it to be an "evil", justify and eulogise desertion from it, and advocate the formation of an "open party".

In present-day Russia, where even the party of the extremely moderate liberals is not legal, our Party can exist only as an

illegal party. The exceptional and unique feature of our position, which somewhat resembles that of the German Social-Democrats under the Anti-Socialist Law (although, even then, the Germans enjoyed a hundred times more legality than we do in Russia), is that our illegal Social-Democratic Labour Party consists of illegal workers' organisations (often called "cells") which are surrounded by a more or less dense network of legal workers' associations (such as sick insurance societies, trade unions, educational associations, athletic clubs, temperance societies, and so forth). Most of these legal associations exist in the metropolis; in many parts of the provinces there are none at all.

Some of the illegal organisations are fairly large, others are quite small and in some cases they consist only of "trusted agents".

The legal associations serve to some extent as a screen for the illegal organisations and for the extensive, legal advocacy of the idea of working-class solidarity among the masses. Nation-wide contacts between the leading working class organisations, the maintenance of a centre (the Central Committee) and the passing of precise Party resolutions on all questions—all these are of course carried out quite illegally and call for the utmost secrecy and trustworthiness on the part of advanced and tested workers.

To come out in the legal press against the "underground" or in favour of an "open party" is simply to disrupt our Party, and we must regard the people who do this as bitter enemies of our Party.

Naturally, repudiation of the "underground" goes hand in hand with repudiation of revolutionary tactics and advocacy of reformism. Russia is passing through a period of bourgeois revolutions. In Russia even the most moderate bourgeois—the Cadets and Octobrists—are decidedly dissatisfied with the government. But they are all enemies of revolution and detest us for "demagogy", for striving again to lead the masses to the barricades as we did in 1905. They are all bourgeois who advocate only "reforms" and spread among the masses the highly pernicious idea that reform is compatible with the present tsarist monarchy.

Our tactics are different. We make use of every reform (insurance, for example) and of every legal society. But we use them to develop the revolutionary consciousness and the revolutionary struggle of the masses. In Russia, where political freedom to this day does not exist, these words have far more direct implications for us than they have in Europe. Our Party conducts revolutionary strikes, which in Russia are growing as in no other country in the world. Take, for example, the month of May alone. In May 1912, 64,000 and in May 1914, 99,000 workers were involved in economic strikes.

The number involved in political strikes was: 364,000 in 1912 and (347,000 in 1914. The combination of political and economic struggle produces the revolutionary strike, which, by rousing the peasant millions, trains them for revolution. Our Party conducts campaigns of revolutionary meetings and revolutionary street demonstrations. For this purpose our Party distributes revolutionary leaflets and an illegal newspaper, the Party's Central Organ. The ideological unification of all these propaganda and agitation activities among the masses is

achieved by the slogans adopted by the supreme bodies of our Party, namely: (1) an eight-hour day; (2) confiscation of the landed estates, and (3) a democratic republic. In the present situation in Russia, where absolute tyranny and despotism prevail and where all laws are suppressed by the tsarist monarchy, only these slogans can effectually unite and direct the entire propaganda and agitation of the Party aimed at effectually sustaining the revolutionary working-class movement.

It amuses us to hear the liquidators say, for example, that we are opposed to "freedom of association", for we not only emphasised the importance of this point of our programme in a special resolution adopted by the January Conference of 1912, but we made ten times more effective use of the curtailed right of association (the insurance societies, for example) than the liquidators did. But when people tell us in the legal press that the slogans of confiscation of the land and of a republic cannot serve as subjects for agitation among the masses, we say that there can be no question of our Party's unity with such people, and such a group of publicists.

Since the purpose of this first part of my report is to explain the gist of our differences, I shall say no more on this point, except to remind you that the fourth part of my report will contain practical proposals, with an exact list of all the cases where the liquidators have departed from our Party's programme and decisions.

I shall not here go into the details of the history of the liquidators' breakaway from our illegal Party, the R.S.D.L.P., but will merely indicate the three main periods of this history.

First period: from the autumn of 1908 to January 1910. The Party combated liquidationism with the aid of precise, official, Party decisions condemning it.

Second period: from January 1910 to January 1912. The liquidators hindered the work of restoring the Central Committee of the Party; they disrupted the Central Committee of the Party and dismissed the last remnants of it, namely, the Technical Commission of the Bureau Abroad of the Central Committee.[10] The Party committees in Russia then (autumn 1911) set up the Russian Organising Commission[11] for the purpose of restoring the Party. That Commission convened the January Conference of 1912. The Conference restored the Party, elected a Central Committee and expelled the liquidationist group from the Party.

Third period: from January 1912 to the present time. The specific feature of this period is that a majority of four-fifths of the class-conscious workers of Russia have rallied around the decisions and bodies created by the January Conference of 1912.

I now come to the second part of my report, in which I shall describe the present state of our Party and of the liquidators in the light of the mass working-class movement in Russia. I shall try to answer the question: does the experience of the mass movement confirm the correctness of our Party's line or of the liquidators' line?

II

On April 22, 1912 (old style) the working-class daily, Pravda, began to appear in Russia, thanks to the restoration of the Party at the January Conference of 1912; this newspaper is pursuing the line (often by hints and always in a curtailed form) laid

down by that Conference. Obviously, we never mention in any organ of the press the illegal connection that exists between the Party's illegal Conference of January 1912 and the Central Committee it set up, on the one hand, and the legal newspaper Pravda, on the other. In September 1912, the rival newspaper of the liquidators, Luch, now called Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta, began to appear. Then, in the autumn of 1912, the Fourth Duma elections took place. In 1913, a new insurance law came into force in Russia, establishing sick funds for the workers. Lastly, the legal trade unions, relentlessly persecuted by the government and repeatedly suppressed, were, nevertheless, constantly revived.

It is not difficult to understand that all these manifestations of the mass working-class movement—especially the daily newspapers of the two trends—provide a vast amount of public, verifiable, and objective data. We deem it our duty to the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau emphatically to protest against the habit of the liquidators and their defenders abroad of making unsubstantiated statements, assurances and declamations, while ignoring the objective facts of the mass working-class movement in Russia.

It is these facts that have definitely strengthened us in our conviction that the line we are pursuing is the right one.

In January 1912 the Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., which restored the illegal Party, was held. The liquidators and the groups abroad (including Plekhanov) greeted it with abuse. But what about the workers in Russia?

The answer to this question was provided by the Fourth Duma elections.

These elections were held in the autumn of 1912. Whereas in the Third Duma 5O per cent (four out of eight) of the deputies elected by the worker curia belonged to our trend, in the Fourth Duma six out of nine, i.e., 67 per cent, of the deputies elected by the worker curia were supporters of the Party. This proves that the masses of the workers sided with the Party and rejected liquidationism. If the six members of the Duma, who incline towards liquidationism, now really desire unity with the Party group in the Duma, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group, then we are obliged to say that recognition of the fact that these deputies are carrying out the will of the majority of the workers is the condition for unity.

To proceed. Daily newspapers are extremely important media of working-class organisation. They contain a vast amount of material proving this, i.e., the figures showing the number of contributions received from workers' groups. Both newspapers, the Pravdist (i.e., the Party) and the liquidationist, publish reports of financial contributions received from workers' groups. These reports are, for Russia, the best conceivable index—public and legal—of the actual state oforganisation of the masses of the workers.

In Western Europe, where the socialist parties are legal, the number of party members is known to everybody, and discussions concerning the organised working-class movement are always based on these figures.

In Russia we have no open, i.e., legal party. The Party's organisations are illegal, secret, "underground", as we say. But an indirect—and also unerring—index of the state of these organisations is provided by the number of financial contributions received from workers' groups.

These figures have been published openly and regularly in both newspapers—for over two years in ours and over eighteen months in the liquidators'—and if any false claim or mistake were made it would immediately have called forth a protest on the part of the workers themselves. Consequently, these figures are absolutely reliable and are the best public and legal index of the state of organisation of the masses of the workers.

Our liquidators, and the groups abroad which defend them, persistently ignore these figures, and say nothing about them in their press; but our workers merely regard this as evidence of their desire to flout the will of the majority of the workers, as evidence of their lack of honesty.

Here are the figures for the whole of 1913. The Pravdists received 2,181 money contributions from workers' groups, while the liquidators received 661. In 1914 (up to May 13), the Pravdists had the support of 2,873 workers' groups, and the liquidators, of 671. Thus, the Pravdists organised 77 per cent of the workers' groups in 1913, and 81 per cent in 1914.

The Pravdists have been publishing these figures regularly since 1912, inviting investigation, pointing to their objective character, and calling upon the genuine(not hypocritical) friends of "unity" straightforwardly and honestly to submit to the will of the majority of the workers. Failing this, all their talk about unity is sheer hypocrisy.

After the liquidators had been fighting the Party for eighteen months, the class-conscious workers of Russia, by a four-fifths majority, approved of the Pravdaline and demonstrated their loyalty to the "underground" and to revolutionary tactics. What we expect from the liquidators and their friends is not

phrases about "unity" against the Party's will, but a straightforward answer to the question: do they or do they not accept the will of the vast majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia?

It is easy to give empty assurances, but it is very difficult to organise a genuine working-class newspaper that is really maintained by the workers. All the foreign comrades know this, and they are more experienced than we are. A real working-class newspaper, i.e., a newspaper that is really financed by the workers and which pursues the Party line, is a powerful instrument of organisation.

What do these figures show? These objective figures show that Pravda is a genuinely working-class newspaper, whereas the liquidationist newspaper, which repudiates the "underground", i. e., the Party, both in its ideas and in the sources from which it obtains its funds is, in fact, a bourgeois newspaper.

From January 1 to May 13, 1914, both newspapers, as usual, published reports of collections, and our newspaper published a summary of these reports. Here are the results. Pravda collected R.21,584.11, of which R.18,934.10 came from workers' groups. Thus, 87 per cent of the contributions came from organised workers and only 13 per cent from the bourgeoisie.

The liquidators collected R.12,055.89, of which R.5,296.12 came from workers' groups, i.e., only 44 per cent—less than half. The liquidators get more than halftheir funds from bourgeois sources.

Moreover, day in day out the entire liberal-bourgeois press eulogises the liquidators, helps then to flout the will of the

majority of the workers, and encouragesthem in their reformism and repudiation of the "underground".

The activities of the groups abroad are exemplified in the newspaper Yedinstvo, run by Comrade Plekhanov, deputy Buryanov, and others. I have before me three issues of this newspaper, the first for May 18 and the third for June 15 of this year. The reports in these issues show that somebody contributed 1,000 rubles to the newspaper through Comrade Olgin, who lives abroad, while collections made abroad amounted to R.207.52. Six (six!) workers' groups contributed 60 rubles.

And this newspaper, which is supported by six workers' groups in Russia, calls upon the workers not to heed the Party's decisions, and calls it a "splitters'" Party! A Party which in the course of two-and-a-half years rallied 5,600 groups of workers around the definitely formulated decisions of the three illegal conferences of 1912 and 1913 is a "splitters'" Party; whereas Plekhanov's group, which united six workers' groups in Russia and collected 1,200 rubles abroad for the purpose of thwarting the will of the Russian workers, is a group which stands for "unity", if you please!

Plekhanov accuses others of being factionalists, as though making separate collections for a separate group, and calling upon the workers not to carry out the decisions adopted by a four-fifths majority, is not factionalism.

As for us, we say plainly that we regard the behaviour of Plekhanov's group as a model of disruption. Plekhanov's conduct is the same as though Mehring, in Germany, were to organise six workers' groups and, in an independent

newspaper, call upon the German Social-Democrats to defy the party which had, let us assume, split away from the Poles.

Plekhanov and we speak in different tongues. We call the solidarity of four-fifths of the workers in Russia real unity, and not unity merely in word; and we call disruption the struggle conducted by groups abroad—financed with money collected abroad—against the majority of the Russian workers.

According to the figures Comrade Vandervelde obtained in St. Petersburg and made public in the tress, Pravda has a circulation of 40,000, while the liquidationist newspaper has one of 16,000. Pravda is maintained by the workers and pays its way, but the liquidationist newspaper is maintained by those whom our newspaper calls their rich friends from among the bourgeoisie.

We are submitting to the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau the financial reports published in both newspapers. To foreign comrades, who know what a serious business a working-class newspaper is, this will be far more convincing than assurances, promises, statements, and abuse of the Leninists.

We ask the liquidators: do they still choose to ignore the objective fact that their group's newspaper is in effect a bourgeois undertaking run for the purpose of advocating repudiation of the "underground" and of flouting the will of the majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia?

If they do, then all their talk about "unity" will continue to evoke derision from our workers.

Those who earnestly seek unity should sincerely admit that the entire liquidationist line is utterly fallacious, as has been proved by Party decisions commencing with 1908, as well as by the experience of the struggle waged by the masses of the workers during the past two-and-a-half years.

To proceed. Here are the objective figures concerning the election of workers' representatives to the insurance bodies. We reject as mere liberalism all talk about political, constitutional reforms in present-day tsarist Russia and will have nothing to do with it; but we take advantage of real reforms, such as insurance, in deedand not in word. The entire workers' group on the All-Russia Insurance Board consists of Pravda supporters, i.e., of workers who have condemned and rejected liquidationism. During the election to this All-Russia Insurance Board, 47 out of the 57 delegates, i. e., 82 per cent, were Pravdists. During the election of the Metropolitan, St. Petersburg, Insurance Board, 37 of the delegates were Pravdists and 7 were liquidators, the Pravdists constituting 84 per cent.

The same can be said about the trade unions. When they hear the talk of the Russian Social-Democrats abroad about the "chaos of factional strife" in Russia (indulged in by Rosa Luxemburg, Plekhanov, Trotsky, and others), our foreign comrades perhaps imagine that the trade union movement in our country is split up.

Nothing of the kind.

In Russia there are no duplicate unions. Both in St. Petersburg and in Moscow, the trade unions are united. The point is that in these unions the Pravdists completely predominate.

Not one of the thirteen trade unions in Moscow is liquidationist.

Of the twenty trade unions in St. Petersburg listed in our Workers' Calendar together with their membership, only the Draftsmen's, Druggist Employees' and Clerks' Unions, and half the members of the Printers' Union, are liquidationist; in all the other unions—Metalworkers', Textile Workers', Tailors', Woodworkers', Shop Assistants', and so forth—the Pravdists completely predominate.

And we say plainly: if the liquidators do not want drastically to change their tactics and put a stop to their disruptive struggle against the organised majority of the class-conscious workers in Russia, let them stop talking about "unity".

Every day Pravda commends the "underground", if only obliquely, and condemns those who repudiate it. And the workers follow the lead of their Pravda.

Here are figures on the illegal press published abroad. After the liquidators' August Conference in 1912, our Party, up to June 1914, put out live issues of an illegal leading political newspaper; the liquidators—nil; the Socialist-Revolutionaries—nine. These figures do not include leaflets issued in Russia for revolutionary agitation during strikes, meetings and demonstrations.

In these five issues you will find mention of 44 illegal organisations of our Party; the liquidators—nil; the Socialist Revolutionaries—21 (mainly students and peasants).

Lastly, in October 1913, an independent Russian Social-Democratic Labour group was formed in the Duma, the aim of that group, unlike that of the liquidators, being to carry out, not flout, the will of the majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia. At that time both newspapers published resolutions

from workers all over Russia supporting either the line of the Party group or that of the liquidationist group. The signatures to the resolutions in favour of the Pravdist, i. e., the Party group in the Duma, numbered 6,722, whereas those supporting the liquidationist group numbered 2,985 (including 1,086 signatures of Bundist workers and 719 of Caucasian workers). Thus, together with all their allies, the liquidators succeeded in collecting less than one-third of the signatures.

These, briefly, are the objective data which we oppose to the bare statements by the liquidators. These objective data on the mass working-class movement in Russia during the past two-and-a-half years definitely prove, through the experience of the class-conscious workers, that our Party line is correct.

Here I must digress and quote a concrete case to prove why "unity" or even "peace" with the present newspaper of the present liquidators is entirely ruled out.

This is an extremely important case, which will explain the attitude of the liquidators towards our Party's illegal activities, and I therefore ask the comrades to pay special attention to it.

It is common knowledge that since 1912 the revolutionary mass strikes have been developing with remarkable success in Russia. The factory owners have tried to counter them with lockouts. To formulate the Party's attitude towards this form of struggle, a conference of our Party, held in February 1913 (note the date: 1913!) drew up and published a resolution illegally.

This resolution (page 11 of the illegal publication) definitely advanced "the immediate task of organising revolutionary street demonstrations". It definitely recommended (ibid.) that "to counteract lockouts, new forms of struggle should be

devised, such as the go-slow strike, for example, and, instead of political strikes, revolutionary, meetings and revolutionary street demonstrations should be organised",

This, we repeat, was in February 1913, i. e., six months after the August Conference (1912) of the liquidators, the very same conference which assured the whole world that the liquidators were not opposed to the "underground". Neither during those six months, from August 1912 to February 1913, nor during the ensuing twelve months, from February 1913 to February 1914, did the August bloc issue a single resolution on this question. Absolutely none! Listen further.

On March 20, 1914, the St. Petersburg factory owners decided to retaliate to a strike by declaring a lockout. In one day 70,000 workers in St. Petersburg were dismissed.

In conformity with our Party's resolution, the St. Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., our Party's illegal organisation in St. Petersburg, decided to meet the lockout with a revolutionary demonstration on April 4, the anniversary of the shootings in the Lena gold-fields.

It illegally issued an appeal to the workers, a copy of which lies before me now. It is signed: "The St. Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P." It repeats the Party's slogans (a republic and confiscation of the land) and ends with the words:

"Comrades! Come out onto the Nevsky Prospekt at 11 a.m. on April 4."

Needless to say, Pravda itself, as a legal publication, could not mention this appeal, let alone reprint it.

What was to be done? How could it convey to its working-class readers, if only to the most class-conscious and advanced of them, the idea that it was necessary to support the illegal appeal for an illegal revolutionary demonstration?

The only thing was to resort to the method that we always resort to, namely, hinting.

And so, on the very day of the demonstration, on Friday, April 4,1914, our paper (Put Pravdy No. 54) published an unsigned leading article under the discreet heading: "Forms of the Working-Class Movement." This article makes direct mention of the "formal decision adopted by the Marxists in February 1913" and hints at a demonstration of a revolutionary character in the following words:

"The class-conscious workers are well acquainted with certain concrete cases when the movement rose to higher forms [i. e., forms of the struggle] which, historically, were subjected to repeated tests, and which are 'unintelligible' and 'alien' only to the liquidators." (Put Pravdy, 1914, No. 54.)

The Russian police and public prosecutors missed the hint. But the class-conscious workers did not.

The demonstration took place. All the bourgeois evening newspapers of April 4 were full of it. The next day, April 5, our paper (see Put Pravdy No. 55) quotedexcerpts from the bourgeois newspapers, which stated that "during the last few days large numbers of leaflets signed by the St. Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. were distributed among the workers, calling for a demonstration on April 4, the anniversary of the events in the Lena gold-fields".

Our paper could not be prosecuted for publishing this passage from the bourgeois newspapers. The result was that the decision of the illegal Party was carried out. A revolutionary demonstration was organised, and this work was backed by a legal newspaper with a readership of 40,000 workers.

And what did the liquidators do?

As I have already said, neither during the six months from August 1912 to February 1913, nor during the whole of the ensuing twelve months did a single illegal decision of the August bloc appear.

Nobody heard anything of illegal appeals by the liquidators (in connection with April 4, 1914) in St. Petersburg, nor did the bourgeois newspapers mention them. It must be said that evidence by the bourgeois newspapers is very important, for when leaflets are distributed in really large numbers, the bourgeois newspapers always hear and write about it. On the other hand, if leaflets are distributed in insignificant numbers, the masses are not aware of the fact, and the bourgeois newspapers say nothing about it.

Thus, the liquidators themselves did nothing to organise the revolutionary demonstration on April 4, 1914. They held aloof.

Moreover, in reporting the demonstration the next day, the legal liquidationist newspaper did not reproduce the information given in the bourgeois newspapers about the distribution of leaflets signed by the St. Petersburg Committee of our Party!

This is monstrous, but it is a fact. I attach here a copy of the liquidationist newspaper of April 5, 1914 (Severnaya

Rabochaya Gazeta No. 48), in order to denounce this fact before the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau.

Just think what this means! People who shout that they want "unity" with our Party, people who claim to be Social-Democrats, conceal from the workers the existence of the illegal organisation of our Party, the St. Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., conceal the fact that the latter issued revolutionary, illegal, underground leaflets, and that it organised the demonstration on April 4, 1914.

People who shout about "unity" with our Party refrain from reproducing information published in the bourgeois newspapers about the mass distribution of underground leaflets signed by the St. Petersburg Committee of our Party!

This should help our comrades in the foreign parties to understand why the question of the "underground" is of such vital and cardinal importance to us.

But even that is not all. A week later, on April 11, 1914, an article appeared in the liquidationist newspaper (Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta No. 51) in which the author sneered at the article published in Pravda of April 4, the day of the demonstration, on the "higher forms" of the struggle, sneered at the fact that Pravda had "clothed its ideas in a form that is difficult to understand"!

Just think: the legal liquidationist newspaper, which is constantly criticising and abusing the "underground" sneers at the fact that our legal newspaper, which desires to help the "underground", does this only in the form of hints!

And for our newspaper's hint at "higher forms", i.e., at the revolutionary, demonstration organised by the St. Petersburg Committee of our Party, the liquidators publicly, in their newspaper, in that very same article, called us "adventurists" and "most unprincipled adventurists", "anarcho-syndicalists" "acting as agents provocateurs against the workers"!

I have with me all the documents, a copy of the leaflet issued by the St. Petersburg Committee, a copy of our newspaper; and a copy of the liquidationist newspaper. Let those comrades who are interested request that these documents be translated for them in full.

On behalf of the Central Committee of our Party and of the vast majority of the organised Social-Democratic workers of Russia, I declare: there can be no "unity" and no "peace" with this group of liquidators as long as a newspaper like this exists!

We cannot carry on our revolutionary activities among the masses in "unity" with such a newspaper.

III

I now come to the third part of my report. Having examined the experience of the mass working-class movement in Russia, which has confirmed the correctness of our line, I now propose to examine the experience of our opponents.

Our opponents, both the liquidators and groups abroad, such as Plekhanov's, like to apply to us the abusive term of "usurpers". They repeated this abuse in the columns of Vorw\"arts in March 1912. But Vorw\"arts did not give us an opportunity of replying! Let us see what political significance there is in the accusation that we are "usurpers".

I have already said that the 1912 Conference was convened by the Russian Organising Commission which was set up by the Party committees after the liquidators had wrecked the old Central Committee. We take credit for having re stored the illegal Party, and the majority of the workers of Russia have recognised this.

But let us assume for a moment that our numerous opponents (numerous in the opinion of the intellectualist groups and the Party groups living abroad) are right. Let us assume that we are "usurpers", "splitters", and so forth. In that case, would it not be natural to expect our opponents to prove, not merely with words, but by the experience of their activities and their unity, that we are wrong.

If we are wrong in asserting that the Party can only be built up by fighting the liquidationist groups, then should we not expect the groups and organisations which disagree with us to prove from the experience of their activities that unity with the liquidators is possible?

But the experience of our opponents shows this. In January 1912, our illegal Party was restored by our Conference, which was representative of the majority of organisations in Russia.

In March 1912, the following united in the columns of Vorw\"arts to abuse us:

the liquidators

the Bund

the Letts

the Poles

the Trotskyists

and the Vperyodists.

What a lot of "trends" and "groups", one might think! How easy it should have been for them to set the workers of Russia a good example by their unity!

But when steps were taken to convene the "August" Conference of the liquidators, it was found that our opponents could not march in step.

Both the Poles and Plekhanov refused to attend the "August" Conference of the liquidators.

Why?

Because they could not agree even on the meaning of the term: membership in the Party!

And so, when Plekhanov's group or Rosa Luxemburg or anybody else, assure themselves and others that it is possible to unite with the liquidators, we answer: dear comrades, you just try yourselves to "unite" with the liquidators on a definition of Party membership, not in word, but in deed.

Further. The Vperyodists attended the August Conference, but afterwards walked out in protest and denounced it as a fiction.

Then, in February 1914, eighteen months after the "August Conference" of the liquidators, the Congress of the Lettish Party was held. The Letts had always been in favour of "unity". The Lettish workers had wanted to work with the liquidators and had proved this, not merely in word, but in deed, by experience.

And after eighteen months' experience, the Letts, while remaining strictly neutral, declared at their congress that they were withdrawing from the August bloc because:

—as the resolution of the Lettish Congress reads:

"The attempt by the conciliators to unite at all costs with the liquidators (the August Conference of 1912) proved fruitless, and the uniters themselves became ideologically and politically dependent upon the liquidators."

If anybody else wants to make the "experiment of uniting with the liquidators", let them do so. We, however, declare that until the liquidators definitely abandon their liquidationist line, unity with them is absolutely impossible.

Lastly, Trotsky's group, the Caucasians under their leader An, and a number of other liquidators ("Em-El", for example) have practically dropped out of the August bloc and founded their own journal, Borba. This journal has no connection with the workers whatsoever, but by its very existence, by its criticism of the liquidators' opportunism, by its breakaway from the liquidators, this journal, which belongs to the group of former liquidators, has proved in deed and by experience that unity with the liquidators is impossible.

Unity will be possible only when the liquidators are ready, once and for all, to abandon their entire tactics and cease to be liquidators.

I shall now proceed to formulate the precise and formal conditions for such "unity".

IV

The following are the practical, concrete conditions, formulated by our Central Committee, which will make "unity" with the liquidators possible for our Party.

First:

1. The Party resolutions on liquidationism, adopted in December 1908 and January 1910, shall be confirmed in the most emphatic and unreserved fashion, in application precisely to liquidationism.

In order that this confirmation may be accepted by all class-conscious workers in Russia as something really serious and final, and in order that no room may be left for any ambiguity, it shall be agreed that whoever opposes (especially in the legal press) the "underground", i. e., the illegal organisation, calls it a "corpse", declares it non existent, that its restoration is a reactionary utopia, and so forth, or, in general, deprecates the role and importance of the "underground", shall be deemed deserving of condemnation and shall not be tolerated in the ranks of the illegal R.S.D.L.P.

It shall be agreed that whoever opposes (especially in the legal press) the "advertising of the illegal press" shall be deemed deserving of condemnation and shall not be tolerated in the ranks of the illegal Party. Membership in the illegal Party shall be open only to those who sincerely devote all their efforts to promoting the development of the illegal press, the publication of illegal leaflets, and so forth.

It shall be agreed that whoever, in any form whatsoever, advocates the formation in present-day Russia of an "open" (i. e., legal) workers' party—for objectively such a party would be a tsarist-monarchist labour party—whoever proclaims the

slogan of an "open party" or of "fighting" for such a party, shall be deemed deserving of condemnation and shall not be tolerated in the ranks of the illegal Party.

It shall be agreed that whoever, in any form whatsoever, opposes (especially in the legal press) revolutionary mass strikes (i. e., strikes which combine the economic and political struggle with revolutionary agitation) and opposes the organisation of revolutionary meetings and street demonstrations, shall be deemed, deserving of condemnation and shall not be tolerated in the ranks of the illegal Party. The banning of attacks against the revolutionary activities of the Party, which conducts strikes and demonstrations, shall also apply to condemnation, in the legal press, of the "strike craze" among the workers, or of "higher forms of the struggle" (=the legal pseudonym for demonstrations).

It shall be agreed that the journal Nasha Zarya and the newspaper Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta are guilty of such deviations from the Social-Democratic line towards "bourgeois influence".

2. It shall be agreed that whoever, in any form whatsoever, declares (especially in the legal press) that the slogans of a democratic republic and confiscation of the landed estates—slogans incorporated in our Party's programme and particularly urgent in present-day Russia, where the tsarist monarchy has reduced the tsar's formal recognition of the constitution to sheer mockery of the people—are useless, or of little use for agitation among the masses, shall, be deemed deserving of condemnation and shall not be tolerated in the ranks of the illegal Party.

It shall be agreed that whereas the liberal press is broad casting the idea of reformism, the idea that political freedom is compatible with the existence of the tsarist monarchy, and that the revolutionary overthrow of tsarism is unnecessary, harmful, and sinful—in view of this, agitation for a constitutional reform such as freedom of association must be conducted, and conducted on the widest possible scale, with a clear realisation, however, that the working class is hostile to the propaganda of the liberal reformists; and this agitation must be closely combined with the task of explaining and disseminating the slogan of a republic, as a slogan for the revolutionary onslaught of the masses against the tsarist monarchy.

3. It shall be agreed that it is absolutely impermissible and incompatible with membership in the Party for any section of our Party—the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party—to enter into a bloc or alliance with any other party.

It shall be agreed that the bloc of the Bund and the liquidators with the Left-wing of the P.S.P., a non-Social-Democratic party, against the will and without the consent of the Polish Social-Democrats, and without a decision by the Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., comes within the category of such prohibited blocs.

Deputy Jagiello, as a member of a non-Social-Democratic party, can be regarded only as being aligned with our Party group in the Duma, but not as a member of that group.

4. It shall be agreed that in every city and every locality there shall be only one united Social-Democratic organisation embracing workers of all nationalities, and conducting activities in all the languages spoken by the local proletariat.

The national-Jewish separatism of the Bund, which to this day, in spite of the decisions of the Stockholm Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. of 1906, which were reaffirmed by the Conference of December 1908, refuses to apply the principle of international unity among the Social-Democratic workers in the localities—a principle which has been applied with such outstanding success in the Caucasus since 1898—shall be condemned.

5. It shall be agreed that the demand for "cultural-national autonomy", which divides the workers according to nationality and is a refined form of nationalism—a demand that was rejected by a formal decision of the Second (1903) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.—contradicts the programme of the Party (as does also that pseudonym for cultural-national autonomy called "the establishment of institutions which will guarantee free national development").

All decisions by all local, national or special organisations of our Party (including the group in the Duma) that accept the principle of cultural-national autonomy shall be an nulled and their re-adoption without a decision of the Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. shall be considered incompatible with membership in the Party.

6. Social-Democratic workers of every shade of opinion shall forthwith be called upon by all Party organisations, and by all the Party's publications in all languages, immediately to bring about unity from below, i. e., to form local, illegal Social-Democratic units, organisations and centres, or to join such organisations where they already exist. In this connection, the principle of federation, or of equality for all "trends" shall be unreservedly rejected, and the only principle to be recognised shall be that of loyal submission of the minority to the majority.

The number of financial contributions made by workers' groups to the newspapers of the various trends since 1913, as reported in the legal press, shall be taken as the most accurate though approximate index of the alignment of forces among the various trends in the working-class movement. Consequently, these figures shall be published in all Party publications, which shall advise all Social-Democrats in the localities to be guided by these figures in all practical steps they take, pending the next Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.

In the matter of defining Party membership, the sole criterion shall be membership in an illegal unit, group, or other organisation (local, factory, district organisation, or Social-Democratic group in some legal society), illegal activities in organising meetings, discussing Party decisions and distributing illegal literature.

All groups and "trends" shall immediately issue absolutely clear and definite illegal announcements about this.

7. The existence of two rival newspapers in the same town or locality shall be absolutely forbidden. The minority shall have the right to discuss before the whole Party, disagreements on programme, tactics and organisation in a discussion journal specially published for the purpose, but shall not have the right to publish, in a rival newspaper, pronouncements disruptive of the actions and decisions of the majority.

Inasmuch as the liquidators' newspaper in St. Petersburg, which is supported chiefly by bourgeois, not proletarian funds, is published contrary to the will of the acknowledged and indisputable majority of the class-conscious Social-Democratic workers in St. Petersburg, and causes extreme disorganisation

by advocating disregard for the will of the majority, it shall be deemed necessary to close this newspaper immediately and to issue a discussion journal in its place.

8. The resolution of the Second Congress of 1903, as well as that of the London Congress of 1907, on the bourgeois-democratic character of the Narodnik trend in general, including the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, shall be most definitely and unreservedly confirmed.

Any blocs, alliances, or temporary agreements between any one section of the Social-Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionaries (or Narodniks in general) against another section of the Social-Democrats, shall be absolutely prohibited.

The St. Petersburg liquidators, who even at their own "August Conference" proclaimed no new Social-Democratic line towards the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and have been entering into blocs and agreements with the Socialist- Revolutionaries against the overwhelming majority of the Social-Democratic workers in St. Petersburg, as was the case during the elections to the Insurance Boards, shall he definitely and unreservedly condemned.

A publicists' bloc shall be forbidden between outstanding liquidators and prominent Social-Democrats belonging to groups that defend the liquidators (Plekhanov, Trotsky, and others), and the Socialist-Revolutionaries who in their St. Petersburg journal Sovremennik assert that "the old cleavage, at all events, has disappeared" and that "it is impossible to tell where Marxism ends and Narodism begins". (Sovremennik No. 7, p. 76.)

Publicists who wish to become members of the Social Democratic Party, but who contribute to that journal for reasons other than the necessity of seeking a livelihood by writing for bourgeois publications, shall be called upon to withdraw from the journal and make a public announcement to this effect.

9. In view of the extreme disorganisation introduced into the working-class movement of Russia by various detached groups abroad, which act without a mandate from any Party organisation in Russia, and without any agreement with such an organisation, it shall be deemed necessary to pass and put into effect a resolution that all groups resident abroad shall without exception communicate with organisations operating in Russia only through the Central Committee of the Party.

Groups abroad which do not submit to the Russian centre of Social-Democratic activity, i. e., the Central Committee, and which cause disorganisation by communicating with Russia independently of the Central Committee, shall have no right to speak on behalf of the R.S.D.L.P.

A Social-Democratic discussion journal shall be founded abroad, with funds collected there, for the purpose of discussing from all angles and free of the censorship, questions concerning the programme, tactics and organisation.

The Party rule (Clause 3) that only "endorsed organisations of the Party have a right to publish Party literature" shall be reaffirmed and strictly applied.

10. The resolution unanimously adopted at the beginning of January 1908 by the London Central Committee shall be deemed absolutely binding on all Social-Democrats.

The resolution reads:

"more vigorous Social-Democratic activity in the trade union movement is prescribed by the entire present situation and must be carried on in keeping with the spirit of the London and Stuttgartresolutions, i. e., under no circumstances in the spirit of recognising the principle that trade unions are neutral or non-Party, but on the contrary, in the spirit of unswerving effort to establish the closest possible connection between the trade unions and the Social-Democratic Party."

It shall be agreed that attempts to conduct agitation in the trade unions against the illegal R.S.D.L.P. are incompatible with membership in the Party.

The liquidators shall undertake to refrain from calling for insubordination to the executives of the unions, to loyally submit to the Marxist majority of the unions, and under no circumstances form separatist duplicate unions.

The same shall apply to activities in all kinds of workers' societies—clubs and the like.

All Social-Democrats in every union, cultural and educational society and the like, shall join the illegal Social-Democratic unit in the respective organisation. The decisions of the illegal Party shall be binding on all such groups.

It shall be agreed that it is obligatory for all Social-Democrats to oppose the division of the trade unions according to nationality.

11. It shall be agreed that newspaper utterances against the representation elected by the St. Petersburg workers to the insurance bodies (the All-Russia Insurance Board, the Metropolitan Insurance Board, and so forth) and appeals for

non-subordination to its direction, etc., must be forbidden. It shall be agreed that the insurance programme approved by this workers' representation is obligatory.

The journal Strakhovanie Rabochikh,[15] which is a rival to the official organ of the workers' insurance representation (Voprosy Strakhovania) shall close down.

12. The Caucasian Social-Democrats must forbid agitation in favour of cultural-national autonomy, which has been rejected by the Programme of the R.S.D.L.P.

The Caucasian Social-Democrats shall undertake not to violate the principle of a united international organisation in every city, and under no circumstances adopt the principle, either in political or industrial organisations, of dividing workers according to nationality.

13. The six members of the Duma (the Chkheidze group), and also deputy Buryanov, must accept all the above conditions.

The Chkheidze group must declare from the Duma rostrum that, in conformity with the Programme of the Russian Social-Democrats, it withdraws its support of "cultural national autonomy" (and its pseudonym: "institutions" etc.).

The Chkheidze group must accept the leadership of the Party's Central Committee elected at the January Conference of 1912, and must recognise as binding all Party decisions, and also the Central Committee's right of veto.

Such are the terms on which the Central Committee of our Party considers unity possible, and on which it under takes to launch

a campaign in favour of unity. We consider it utterly impossible to have any negotiations or contacts with the liquidators' group which publishes Nasha Zarya and Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta, as long as it pursues its present tactics. As far as their political role in the working-class movement in Russia is concerned, we regard all the other groups, trends, factions and bodies which defend the liquidators or advocate unity or compromise with them, as fictions.

We declare that to feed the working class of Russia with verbal assurances and promises that unity with the liquidationist group is possible and easy, means rendering very bad service to the cause, and passing off phrases for reality.

We therefore make the following practical proposal.

A year ago, the question was raised in our Party of convening a Party congress. This was announced in the resolutions of the 1913 Summer Conference of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The arrangements for convening this congress are now almost completed. In all probability, a congress of our Party will be held in the very near future, immediately after the Vienna Congress, or even while it is being held. Of course, we ask the comrades not to announce this or speak of it. If arrests are very numerous, perhaps a conference will be held instead of a congress.

Thus, while refraining from any steps towards a rapprochement with the liquidationist group or its defenders until the above terms are accepted and carried out, we propose that all groups, trends and factions, which—unlike us—hold that unity, or peace, or compromise with the present liquidationist group such as it is, is possible considering its

present tactics, we propose that these groups should take the opportunity provided by the Vienna Congress to organise a joint formal discussion of our terms.

Let those who advocate peace or compromise with the liquidators not confine themselves to propaganda, but prove indeed that unity with the present liquidators is possible.

For our part, We shall be very glad if we are able to inform the representatives of four-fifths of the workers of Russia gathered at the congress or conference of our Party as to the outcome of the conference between all groups that defend the liquidators, and the liquidationist group.

14. In conclusion, I must touch upon one other point which, although very unpleasant, cannot be avoided if we are to have a sincere and frank exchange of opinion on the question of Social-Democratic unity in Russia.

The point is the following:

In their press, our opponents, the liquidators, are conducting a bitter personal campaign against several members of our Party, accusing them publicly and before the masses, of a host of dishonourable, despicable and criminal actions, or else reporting in their newspaper "rumours" about such actions. Our Party press replies to these attacks and, in the name of the Central Committee of our Party, plainly and definitely calls the liquidators—and especially their two leaders, Dan and Martov—slanderers.

It is not difficult to realise the degree of disorganisation and demoralisation the liquidators are spreading among the masses by this sort of "campaign", to which we shall always retaliate

on the principle "à corsaire—corsaire et demi". We shall briefly quote four examples:

1. In 1911, L. Martov published in Paris a pamphlet entitled Saviours or Destroyers, devoted in the main to accusations against Lenin of having committed dishonourable and criminal acts; Martov sent a German translation of this pamphlet to Kautsky, who was then acting as arbiter in a controversial question affecting Russian Social-Democracy. In a letter to Lunacharsky (of the Vperyod group) Kautsky described Martov's pamphlet as "disgusting", and this opinion was published in the Russian Social-Democratic press by Plekhanov. The liquidators' newspaper is now beginning, in the form of insinuations, gradually to spread the contents of this pamphlet among the Russian public.

2. Since 1913 the liquidators' newspaper has been constantly accusing Dansky, a member of our Party and an insurance expert, of dishonesty. The pretext for these accusations is that Dansky works for an employers' organisation, thus serving the bourgeoisie. Our Party, as represented by a number of bodies (the editorial boards of Pravda and Prosveshcheniye, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma, several trade unions, etc.), examined these accusations and found that Dansky had gradually given up working for the employers and was serving the working-class movement, beginning as anonymous contributor toPravda. When Dansky definitely joined our Party he was requested, in conformity with the resolutions of our Party, to sever all connections with the employers' organisation. Dansky did so and gave up his job. On behalf of the Central Committee, I repeat that our Party regards this man as an honest comrade, and it will not permit anybody

to besmirch his honour with impunity. Our press, in accusing the liquidators of slandering Dansky, pointed out that in this case the liquidators were particularly dishonest, because Martov himself constantly writes for a bourgeois newspaper under a different pseudonym (here I will fully reveal the fact: Yegorov, in Kievskaya Mysl); Yezhov, one of the closest collaborators of the liquidationist newspaper, was on the staff of an employers' association, as was, or is, also the case with Yermansky.

3. Malinovsky, a Duma member, suddenly left the Duma and resigned without giving any reason. Our workers called together their local and central leading bodies and sentenced Malinovsky to expulsion from the Party, describing his unexplained resignation without consultation with his colleagues as disruptive, and as desertion from his post. The liquidationist newspaper then began to publish anonymous rumours to the effect that Malinovsky was an agent provocateur, and demanded a joint investigation by the different groups. Our Central Committee declared that it vouched for Malinovsky, had investigated the rumours, and was convinced that Dan and Martov were indulging in base slander. The Central Committee rejected the proposal for a joint commission with the liquidators and, following on the opinion expressed by the representatives of ten trade unions in Moscow, denounced as slanderers those people who dared to publish in the press anonymous "rumours" about agents provocateurs, instead of submitting these rumours in an organised manner to our Central Committee, or to their ownCentral Committee (their "O. C."), to the Bund and to groups that trust the liquidators, to have them investigated by boards and responsible bodies. Burtsev declared that he did not believe the

rumours. The Committee of Investigation set up by our Central Committee declared that it would publish the facts about those who were circulating these rumours. I can only add that these rumours were circulated by the liquidators.

4. Some days ago the liquidationist newspaper published an open letter from ex-member of the Second Duma Alexinsky, accusing Comrade Antonov, a member of our Party who had served a term of penal servitude, of being a traitor. But Comrade Antonov's conduct was pronounced unimpeachable both by a special committee consisting of comrades who had served sentence with him, as well as by a decision of the Central Committee of the Party adopted in 1907–08 in Finland, when the Mensheviks (i.e., the present liquidators) and all the "national organisations" were represented on the Central Committee. The answer given in our press is again tantamount to accusing Dan and Martov of spreading slander.

On instructions from the Central Committee, I must submit to the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau the following practical proposal on this matter. We regard the liquidators' procedure as a specific method of political struggle used by people who have been expelled from the Party. We therefore harbour no hope that this matter can be "rectified" with the aid of moral precepts. But when bodies which screen the liquidators (the "0. C." and the Bund, for example, as well as Trotsky), and the numerous groups abroad (including Plekhanov) talk to us about "unity" with these liquidators, we make them the following proposal before the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau:

let them declare openly and publicly, without equivocation, whether they approve or disapprove of the liquidators'

"campaign" on all the four points enumerated (to which we are sure the liquidators will add another 44).

If they disapprove, let the workers of Russia know it.

If they approve, let all groups that offer us "unity" or compromise with the liquidators elect a joint commission and formulate a reasoned, business-like, and open charge of dishonest conduct against certain members of our Party. We shall submit this charge to our Party congress and invite representatives of this commission of all groups which defend the liquidators to attend our congress and produce their evidence.

We deem it our duty to declare that if this is not done, it will strengthen the opinion, already being expressed in the ranks of our Party, that all groups that advocate "unity" with the liquidators are tacitly supporting the slanderers.

In the name of the majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia, we shall defend the organisation of our Party from the disruptors, and we shall recognise no means of defence other than those we have applied, and which I have enumerated above (not to mention the bourgeois law court, to which we shall resort at the first opportunity).

The report I have been instructed to make on behalf of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is finished. Permit me to sum up in two brief theses:

Formally, the situation is as follows. Our Party, which was restored at the January 1912 Conference in the teeth of the resistance from the liquidators' group, expelled that group. After this, after two-and-a-half years of the movement, the

overwhelming majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia have approved of our Party line. We therefore have every reason to be convinced more firmly than ever that our line is correct, and we shall not depart from it. If the liquidators and the groups defending them want us to rescind the resolution expelling the liquidators from the Party, our Central Committee is prepared to submit a motion to that effect to our Party congress and to support it only on the terms I have mentioned.

Materially, i. e., in substance, the position is as follows. Russia is passing through a period of bourgeois revolutions, during which small and unstable groups of intellectuals are sometimes inclined to regard themselves as Social-Democrats, or to support the opportunist trend in the Social-Democratic movement, which our Party has been fighting against for the past twenty years (Economism in 1895–1902, Menshevism in 1903–08, and liquidationism in 1908–14). The experience of the August (1912) bloc of liquidators and its break-down have shown that the liquidators and their defenders are absolutely incapable of forming any kind of party or organisation. The genuine workers' Social-Democratic Party of Russia which, in spite of enormous difficulties, has already united eight-tenths of the class conscious workers (counting only Social-Democrats) or seven-tenths (counting Social-Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries) can be built up, and is being built up, only in the struggle against these groups.

Appendix

INSTRUCTIONS

I. NOTES PRIVÉES

On the question as to the connection existing between the figures on whether the majority or the minority of workers follow the lead of the Pravdists, or rather, are themselves Pravdists, in Russia, and the question of "unity", it should be noted:

1. If a party or group definitely and concretely advances a programme or tactics with which our Party cannot agree in principle, then the question of a majority is of course of no significance. If, for example, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party (Left Narodniks), whose programme and tactics differ from ours, were to win over the majority of workers in Russia, that would not in the least induce us to depart from our line. The same applies to the straightforward and definite repudiation of the "underground" (=illegal Party) in present-day Russia.

However, certain Social-Democratic groups and some liquidators assert that there are no irreconcilable disagreements on principle between us. We are obliged to point out their inconsistency to these groups and individuals, when they refuse to submit to the majority.

2. We have been convinced of the correctness of our line on tactics and organisation primarily by our long years of acquaintance with the workers' Social-Democratic movement in Russia, and by our participation in it, as well as by our theoretical Marxist convictions. But we are of the opinion that the practical experience of the mass working-class movement is no less important than theory, and that this experience alone can serve as a serious test of our principles. "Theory, my friend, is grey, but the tree of life is eternally green" (Faust). Therefore, the fact that, after two-and-a-half years of struggle against liquidationism and its allies, four-fifths of the class-conscious

workers have expressed them selves in favour of Pravdism, strengthens our conviction that our line is correct and makes this conviction unshakable.

3. In Russia, nearly every group, or "faction" (to use the old terminology), accuses the other of being not a workers' group, but a bourgeois intellectualist group. We consider this accusation or rather argument, this reference to the social significance of a particular group, extremely important in principle. But precisely because we consider it extremely important, we deem it our duty not to make sweeping statements about the social significance of other groups, but to back ourstatements with objective facts. For the objective facts prove absolutely and irrefutably that Pravdism alone is a workers' trend in Russia, whereas liquidationism and Socialist-Revolutionism are in fact bourgeois intellectualist trends.

II. NOTES PRIVÉES

Should an attempt be made (whether by any member of the International Socialist Bureau, or by our opponents) to "dismiss" or set aside the evidence, the objective proofs, that we are the majority, then be sure to ask for the floor so as to make a formal statement on behalf of the entire delegation and enter a formal protest of the following nature:

We categorically protest against the statement (or hints, inferences, etc.) that our objective evidence as to the side which the overwhelming majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia are supporting, cannot be examined by the Executive Committee on the grounds that it has not verified them (or on the grounds that they are irrelevant to the question of unity). On the contrary, we consider that it is in the indubitable interest

of the entire International, and in accordance with the will of the International Socialist Bureau, as clearly expressed in the resolution of the I.S.B. (December 1913), to receive the fullest, most precise, and documented information on the actual state of the working-class movement in Russia.

We are of the opinion that our opponents, who are aware of the December decision of the I.S.B., have failed to perform their duty in not yet having independently collected objective data on the working-class movement in Russia.

We declare that after Comrade Vandervelde's successful visit to Russia, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the Executive Committee of the I.S.B. could, through Comrade Vandervelde, quite legally have addressed an open letter to the editors of all the working-class (or would-be working-class) newspapers in Russia, and to all the members of the executives of all the legal workers' societies in Russia, for the purpose of obtaining from direct sources data showing how the class-conscious workers of Russia are divided into Pravdists, liquidators, Socialist-Revolutionaries (Left Narodniks), and other trends.

Without such objective data, the subjective statements of the representatives of individual "groups" are entirely worthless.

III. NOT FOR THE REPORT

Judging from certain fragmentary statements by the liquidators at the Lettish Congress and from hints in the press, one of the fraudulent plans for "unity" they propose is that of a "general congress".

This plan, whose obvious object is to dupe credulous foreigners, is roughly as follows: either set up a "federated" organising

committee for the purpose of convening a general congress, or "supplement" the Central Committee of our Party with representatives of one of the liquidationist organisations for the purpose of convening this congress.

In whatever the form it is presented, this plan is wholly unacceptable to us, and if it nevertheless comes up at the "conference" in Brussels, our delegation of the Central Committee must declare the following:

It is absolutely impossible for us to take any step towards a general congress or federation, or even towards the slightest rapprochement, until the liquidators' group complies with the terms we propose. For unless that group fulfils these terms, it will be impossible for us to place the slightest confidence in the liquidators' group which has been expelled from the Party, and, in its paper, is daily continuing its disruptive activities.

If we placed any confidence in this group, it would encourage it to continue its disruptive work: On the basis of decisions of our congresses, conferences and our Central Committee, we demand the cessation of these activities of the liquidators as a conditio sine qua non of "peace".

The fact that the liquidators are shielded by groups or organisations which have not been formally expelled from the Party (for example, the Bund, or the Caucasian Regional Bureau, or the six deputies, etc.) does not in the least alter the case. As far as work in Russia is concerned, only one thing really matters, i. e., that this group of liquidators and their newspaper advocate flouting the will of the majority.

Let the Bund, Chkheidze's six deputies and the others—or the Caucasian Regional Committee, or Trotsky, or the O.C., or

anybody else who desires rapprochement with us, first of all induce the liquidators' group to accept our terms, or else emphatically condemn it and break with it. Unless this is done, we cannot take the slightest step that might in any way indicate confidence in the liquidators' group.

Let those who really want to see Russian Social-Democracy united harbour no illusions and yield to no subjective assurances, promises and the like. There is one and only one way to unity, and that is to induce the minority which has left the illegal Party and is trying to thwart and disrupt its activities and the will of the majority, to abandon its present practices and prove in deed that it is willing to respect the will of the majority.

No direct or indirect encouragement of the liquidators' group in its present conduct, or attempts to inspire it with hopes of the possibility of "federation", "conciliation", a "general congress", "rapprochement", or the like with that group, as long as it continues its present activities and refuses to submit in deed to the will of the majority, will lead to anything. The Party of the Social-Democratic workers in Russia, which unites four-fifths of the class-conscious workers, will not allow its will to be thwarted.

Let those groups or bodies which "assure" themselves and others that the liquidators are not so bad (the Bund, the O.C., the Caucasian Regional Committee) realise that we want not words but deeds. If they trust the liquidators, let them organise their own congress with them, submit our terms to that congress, and induce the liquidators to give a favourable reply to these terms and faithfully carry them out. We shall wait and see the results; we shall wait and see their actions; we shall not believe promises.

Only after our terms have been faithfully complied with will a general congress, and steps towards it, be possible.

Our foreign socialist comrades are sometimes most sadly mistaken when they think that the cause of unity can be promoted by inspiring the liquidators with the hope that we will agree to co-operate with them even if they do not completely and radically change their conduct, and even if they do not submit to the will of the majority. Objectively, such tactics amount to helping, not the cause of unity, but the splitters.

Our terms constitute a draft of a pacte d'unité, and until this pact is signed by the liquidators and until they have carried it out in practice, there can be no talk of taking any steps towards a rapprochement.

IV

Re the demonstration of 4.4. 1914. I have ordered from St. Petersburg (in Popov's name) issue No. 18 of Stoikaya Mysl (Socialist-Revolutionary) and bourgeois papers for 4--5.4.1914. If it arrives it should be used to supplement the documents of the report.

We do not assert that the liquidators never issued leaflets. They had one in May 1913 (the Vienna leaflet); in 1914, the St. Petersburg people say, they had none. They are said to have had one about the strike.

But 4.4. 1914 is a typical case of the wrecking of illegal work.

If Plekhanov or Rubanovich wish to ask publicly whether we vote for their attendance, I would reply: "We would vote against, because Rubanovich is not a Social-Democrat, and

Plekhanov does not represent anything in Russia. But since our report contains a direct attack on Plekhanov's group and Rubanovich's trend, we do not wish to vote against, and shall abstain.

Guarantees for the minority?—we may be asked.

"No, we can discuss no guarantees whatever either with the group of liquidators expelled from the Party, or concerning that group. We ourselves demand guarantees from the liquidators and their friends."

N.B. The general spirit of our terms: fight against departures from the old, against a swing towards a new party. Nous ne marchons pas! Cf. Axelrod on "party reform, or rather on a party = revolution".

N.B. ||| A person who writes like this is ridiculous, if he complains about a split!

Is an "All-Russia S.D.L.P." legitimate without the non-Russian nationalities?

It is, because it was an All-Russia party from 1898 to 1903 without the Poles and Letts, and from 1903 to 1906 without the Poles, Letts and the Bund!

We did not exclude the non-Russian nationalities. They themselves left on account of the liquidators. Tant pis pour eux!

Fight with all our might to have the Conference Minutes published. Submit a written protest in the event of refusal (in case of a general refusal, demand that our resolutions be published—we shall publish them in any case—as well as

counter-resolutions (the Executive Committee may eliminate personal attacks)).

We have one aim—to make the liquidators+Bund+P.S.P.+Plekhanov formulate counter-resolutions and counter-proposals. As for us, we agree to nothing, and walk out, promising to submit the "counter-proposals" of our dear comrades to our congress.

The most important thing is to emphasise (best of all in a reply) that our "terms" were in the main published long ago by the workers. I am sending Popov the appropriate issues of Pravda.

What procedure is desirable, from our point of view, for the conference in Brussels?

First, the reports of all organisations and groups—this will take up a fairly long time. Then brief comments followed by a formulation of concrete proposals made by all organisations and groups.

When all the participants at the conference have formulated their concrete proposals, each of them should express his opinion whether he considers these proposals a basis for possible further steps towards a rapprochement or talks on rapprochement, or, if he considers that impossible, he will submit all the proposals to his organisation.

Clearly, we, in any case, shall not accept the proposals of the liquidators, the Bund, Rosa and Plekhanov (as well as of Kautsky and Vandervelde), and shall submit them to our congress or conference.

Our task is only to make our terms clear, make a note of "their" terms, and walk out.

Are not our terms in the nature of an ultimatum?—we may be asked. They are not. We shall see what counter proposals are made to us before saying whether we agree to continued talks on this basis or not (we should let everyone have his say, ask everyone for counter-proposals on all questions, and go away. Voilà notre programme!

Should Polish affairs be kept apart from Russian? I think we ought to be opposed to separation. We shall consult our Polish comrade on this.

Obviously, people will go out of their way to attack us for our "monstrous" demands. We should calmly refer to the resolutions of our conferences and meetings and the resolutions on unity adopted by the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Caucasian and other comrades. I shall send a collection of them. We sum up the opinions of our organisations. If any body chooses to disregard them, that is their business. Nous n'y pouvons rien.

According to the liquidators' newspaper, Vandervelde threw out a feeler in St. Petersburg as to whether we would agree to the Executive Committee acting, not as mediator but as arbiter, that is, as supreme "judge" in our disagreements.

The answer is this. When Bebel proposed this in 1905 our congress rejected it with thanks, declaring that we were an autonomous party. I think today our congress will give the same reply. (Such, at any rate, is the opinion of the Central Committee.)

On "slanderous" affairs "they" will probably propose a general withdrawal of all accusations. Ask this to be put to the vote! We are against. We shall submit their proposal to our congress. (They will be in a proper mess if they make and carry through

such a proposal.) [[We do not equate the guilt of a spreader of slander with the conduct of a person who has called a slanderer a slanderer.]]

Generally speaking, there is no doubt that "they" will all seek "half-way" and "conciliatory" formulas. We shall point out that this attempt was made with regard to us in January 1910 and with regard to the Letts in August 1912, and we shall not repeat it. Let the conference divide into two clear camps: those who consider rapprochement with the present liquidators possible, and those who turn down the idea of rapprochement unless the liquidators radically change their tactics and behaviour.

"Conciliatory" formulas should be carefully recorded (this is most important), then slightly criticised, and——everything rejected.

The First Imperialist World War (1914–17)

What Has Been Revealed By the Trial of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Duma Group

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 40, March 29, 1915.

The trial, by the tsar's court, of five members of the R.S.D.L. Duma group and six other Social-Democrats seized on November 4, 1914 at a conference near Petrograd has ended. They have all been sentenced to life exile in Siberia. The censor has deleted from accounts of the trial published in the legal press all the passages that may be unpleasant to tsarism and the patriots. The "internal enemies" have been rapidly dealt with and again nothing is to be seen or heard on the surface of public life except the savage howling of a pack of bourgeois chauvinists, echoed by some handfuls of social-chauvinists.

What, then, has the trial of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group proved?

First of all, it has shown that this advance contingent of revolutionary Social-Democracy in Russia failed to display sufficient firmness at the trial. It was the aim of the accused to prevent the State Prosecutor from finding out the names of the members of the Central Committee in Russia and of the Party's representatives in its contacts with workers' organisations. That aim has been achieved. To continue achieving that aim in the future, we muse resort to a method long recommended officially by the Party, i.e., refuse to give evidence. However, to attempt to prove one's solidarity with the social-patriot Mr. Yordansky, as Rosenfeld did, or one's disagreement with the

Central Committee, is a wrong method, one that is inexcusable from the standpoint of a revolutionary Social-Democrat.

We shall note that, according to a Dyen report (No. 40)[2]—there is no official or complete record of the trial—Comrade Petrovsky stated: "In the same period [November] I received the Central Committee resolution . . . and besides I was given resolutions adopted by workers in seven various places concerning their attitude towards the war, resolutions coinciding with the Central Committee's attitude. "

This declaration does Petrovsky credit. The tide of chauvinism was running high on all sides. In Petrovsky's diary there is an entry to the effect that even the radical-minded Chkheidze spoke with enthusiasm of a war for "liberty". This chauvinism was resisted by the R.S.D.L. group deputies when they were free, but it was also their duty, at the trial, to draw a line of distinction between themselves and chauvinism.

The Cadet Rech had servilely "thanked" the tsar's court for "dispelling the legend" that the Russian Social-Democratic deputies wanted the defeat of the tsar's armies. Taking advantage of the fact that in Russia the Social-Democrats are tied hand and foot in their activities, the Cadets are pretending to take seriously the so-called "conflict" between the Party and the Duma group and declare that the accused gave their evidence without the least compulsion. What innocent babes? They pretend ignorance of the threat of a court-martial and the death sentence that hung over the deputies in the early stage of the trial.

The comrades should have refused to give evidence concerning the illegal organisation, and, in view of the historic importance

of the moment, they should have taken advantage of a public trial to openly set forth the Social-Democratic views, which are hostile, not only to tsarism in general, but also to social-chauvinism of all and every shade.

Let the government and bourgeois press wrathfully attack the R.S.D.L. group; let the Social-Revolutionaries, liquidators and social-chauvinists (who must fight us somehow, if they cannot fight us on the issue of principles!) with gleeful malice "discover" signs of weakness or of fictitious "disagreement with the Central Committee". The Party of the revolutionary proletariat is strong enough to openly criticise itself, and unequivocally call mistakes and weaknesses by their proper names. The class-conscious workers of Russia have created a party and have placed in the forefront an advance contingent which, during a world war and the world-wide collapse of international opportunism have revealed more than anyone else the ability to perform their duty as internationalist revolutionary Social-Democrats. The road we have been travelling has been tested by the greatest of all crises, and has proved, over and over again, the only correct road. We shall follow it still more firmly and resolutely; we shall throw out fresh advance contingents, and shall see to it that they not only carry out the same work, but carry it through more correctly.

Secondly, the trial has revealed a picture without precedent in world socialism—that of revolutionary Social-Democracy making use of parliamentarianism. More than any speeches, this example will appeal to the minds and hearts of the proletarian masses; more convincingly than any arguments, it will refute the legalist opportunists and anarchist phrase-mongers. The report on Muranov's illegal work and

Petrovsky's notes will long remain a model of that kind of work carried out by our deputies, which we have had diligently to conceal, and the meaning of which will give all class-conscious workers in Russia more and more food for thought. At a time when nearly all "socialist"(forgive the debasement of the word!) deputies in Europe have proved chauvinists and servants of chauvinists, when the famous "Europeanism" that once charmed our liberals and liquidators has proved an obtuse habitude of slavish legality, there was to be found in Russia a workers' party whose deputies excelled, not in high-flown speech, or being "received" in bourgeois, intellectualist salons, or in the business acumen of the "European" lawyer and parliamentarian, but in ties with the working masses, in dedicated work among those masses, in carrying on modest, unpretentious, arduous, thankless and highly dangerous duties of illegal propagandists and organisers. To climb higher, towards the rank of a deputy or minister influential in "society" such has been the actual meaning of "European" (i.e., servile) "socialist" parliamentarism. To go into the midst of the masses, to help enlighten and unite the exploited and the oppressed—such is the slogan advanced by the examples set by Muranov and Petrovsky.

This slogan will acquire historic significance. In no country in the world will a single thinking worker agree to confine himself to the old legality of bourgeois parliamentarism, when that legality has been abolished with a stroke of the pen in all the advanced countries, and has led to merely a closer actual alliance between the opportunists and the bourgeoisie. Whoever dreams of "unity" between revolutionary Social-Democratic workers and the "European" Social-Democratic legalists of yesterday, and of today, has learned nothing and

forgotten everything, and is in fact an ally of the bourgeoisie and an enemy of the proletariat. Whoever has to this day failed to realise why the R.S.D.L. group broke away from the Social-Democratic group that was making its peace with legalism and opportunism can now learn a lessen from the activities of Muranov and Petrovsky as described in the report on the trial. It was not only by these two deputies that this work was conducted, and only hopelessly naïve people can dream of a compatibility between such work and a "friendly and tolerant attitude" towards Nasha Zarya or Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta,[4] towards Sovremennik, the Organising Committee, or the Bund.

Do the government hope to intimidate the workers by sending the members of the R.S.D.L. group to Siberia? They will find themselves mistaken. The workers will not be intimidated, but will the better understand their aims, those of a workers' party as distinct from the liquidators and the social-chauvinists. The workers will learn to elect to the Duma only men such as the members of the R.S.D.L. group, and for similar and ever more extensive work, such that will be conducted among the masses with still more secrecy. Do the government intend to do away with "illegal parliamentarianism" in Russia? They will merely consolidate the links between the proletariat exclusively with that kind of parliamentarism.

Thirdly, and most important, the court proceedings against the R.S.D.L. group have, for the first time, produced open and objective material, disseminated all over Russia in millions of copies, concerning the most fundamental, the most significant and most vital question of the attitude of the various classes in Russian society towards the war. Have we not had enough of

nauseating intellectualist jabber about the compatibility between "defence of the fatherland" and internationalism "in principle"(i.e., purely verbal and hypocritical internationalism)? Has not the time come to examine the facts that bear upon classes, i.e., millions of living people, not some dozens of phrase-mongers?

Over half a year has passed since the outbreak of war. The press, both legal and illegal, and expressing all trends, has had its say; all the party groups in the Duma have defined their stands—a highly insufficient index of our class groupings, but the only objective one. The trial of the R.S.D.L. group and the press comment on it have summed up all this material. The trial has shown that the finest representatives of the proletariat in Russia are not only hostile to chauvinism in general but, in particular, share the stand of our Central Organ. The deputies were arrested on November 4, 1914. Consequently, they had been conducting their work for over two months. How and with whom did they carry it on? Which currents in the working class did they reflect and express? The answer is found in the fact that the "theses" and Sotsial-Demokrat provided the material for the conference, and that, on several occasions, the Petrograd Committee of our Party issued leaflets of the same nature. There was no other material at the conference. The deputies had no intention of reporting to the conference on other currents in the working class, because no other currents existed.

Perhaps the members of the R.S.D.L. group were expressing the opinion of a mere minority of, the workers? We have no grounds to suppose so, since, in the two and a half years, between the spring of 1912 and the autumn of 1914, four-fifths

of the class-conscious workers of Russia rallied around Pravda, with which these deputies were working in complete ideological solidarity. That is a fact. Had there been a more or less appreciable protest among the workers against the Central Committee's stand, that protest would have surely found expression in the resolutions proposed. Nothing of the kind emerged at the trial, though the latter, it might be said, did "reveal" much of the work done by the R.S.D.L. group. The corrections made in Petrovsky's handwriting do not reveal even the slightest hint at any difference of opinion.

The facts show that, in the very first months after the outbreak of the war, the class-conscious vanguard of the workers of Russia rallied, in deed, about the Central Committee and the Central Organ. However unpleasant this fact may be to certain "groups", it is undeniable. Thanks to the trial, the words cited in the indictment: "The guns should be directed, not against our brothers, the wage slaves of other countries, but against the reactionary and bourgeois governments and parties of all countries"—these words will spread—and have already done so—all over Russia as a call for proletarian internationalism, for the proletarian revolution. Thanks to the trial, the class slogan of the vanguard of the workers of Russia has reached the masses of the workers.

An epidemic of chauvinism among the bourgeoisie and a certain section of the petty bourgeoisie, vacillation in the other section of the latter, and a working class call of this nature—such is the actual and objective picture of our political divisions. It is to this actual situation, not to the pious wishes of intellectuals and founders of grouplets, that one must gear one's "prospects", hopes, and slogans.

The Pravdist papers and the "Muranov type" of work have brought about the unity of four-fifths of the class-conscious workers of Russia. About forty thousand workers have been buying Pravda ; far more read it. Even if war, prison, Siberia, and hard labour should destroy five or even ten times as many—this section of the workers cannot be annihilated. It is alive. It is imbued with the revolutionary spirit, is anti-chauvinist. It alone stands in the midst of the masses, with deep roots in the latter, as the champion of the internationalism of the toilers, the exploited, and the oppressed. It alone has held its ground in the general debâcle. It alone is leading the semi-proletarian elements away from the social-chauvinism of the Cadets, the Trudoviks, Plekhanov and Nasha Zarya, and towards socialism. Its existence, its ideas, its work, and its call for the "brotherhood of wage slaves of other countries" have been revealed to the whole of Russia by the trial of the R.S.D.L. group.

It is with this section that we must work, and its unity must be defended against social-chauvinists. That is the only road along which the working-class movement of Russia can develop towards social revolution, and not towards national-liberalism of the "European" type.

Reply to P. Kievsky (Y. Pyatakov) - Lenin

Lenin

August-September 1916

Like every crisis in the life of individuals or in the history of nations, war oppresses and breaks some, steels and enlightens others.

The truth of that is making itself felt in Social-Democratic thinking on the war and in connection with the war. It is one thing to give serious thought to the causes and significance of an imperialist war that grows out of highly developed capitalism, Social-Democratic tactics in connection with such a war, the causes of the crisis within the Social-Democratic movement, and so on. But it is quite another to allow the war to oppress your thinking, to stop thinking and analysing under the weight of the terrible impressions and tormenting consequences or features of the war.

One such form of oppression or repression of human thinking caused by the war is the contemptuous attitude of imperialist Economism towards democracy. P. Kievsky does not notice that running like a red thread through all his arguments is this war-inspired oppression, this fear, this refusal to analyse. What point is there in discussing defence of the fatherland when we are in the midst of such a terrible holocaust? What point is there in discussing nations' rights when outright strangulation is everywhere the rule? Self-determination and "independence" of nations—but look what they have done to "independent" Greece! What is the use of talking and thinking of "rights", when rights are every where being trampled upon in the

interests of the militarists! What sense is there in talking and thinking of a republic, when there is absolutely no difference whatsoever between the most democratic republics and the most reactionary monarchies, when the war has obliterated every trace of difference!

Kievsky is very angry when told that he has given way to fear, to the extent of rejecting democracy in general. He is angry and objects: I am not against democracy, only against one democratic demand, which I consider "bad". But though Kievsky is offended, and though he "assures" us (and himself as well, perhaps) that he is not at all "against" democracy, his arguments—or, more correctly, the endless errors in his arguments—prove the very opposite.

Defence of the fatherland is a lie in an imperialist war, but not in a democratic and revolutionary war. All talk of "rights" seems absurd during a war, because every war replaces rights by direct and outright violence. But that should not lead us to forget that history has known in the past (and very likely will know, must know, in the future) wars (democratic and revolutionary wars) which, while replacing every kind of "right", every kind of democracy, by violence during the war, nevertheless, in their social content and implications, served the cause of democracy, and consequently socialism. The example of Greece, it would seem, "refutes" all national self-determination. But if you stop to think, analyse and weigh matters, and do not allow yourself to be deafened by the sound of words or frightened and oppressed by the nightmarish impressions of the war, then this example is no more serious or convincing than ridiculing the republican system because the "democratic" republics, the most democratic—not only France,

but also the United States, Portugal and Switzerland—have already introduced or are introducing, in the course of this war, exactly the same kind of militarist arbitrariness that exists in Russia.

That imperialist war obliterates the difference between republic and monarchy is a fact. But to therefore reject the republic, or even be contemptuous towards it, is to allow oneself to be frightened by the war, and one's thinking to be oppressed by its horrors. That is the mentality of many supporters of the "disarmament" slogan (Roland-Hoist, the younger element in Switzerland, the Scandinavian "Lefts" and others). What, they imply, is the use of discussing revolutionary utilisation of the army or a militia when there is no difference in this war between a republican militia and a monarchist standing army, and when militarism is every where doing its horrible work?

That is all one trend of thought, one and the same theoretical and practical political error Kievsky unwittingly makes at every step. He thinks he is arguing only against self-determination, he wants to argue only against self-determination, [sic] but the result—against his will and conscience, and that is the curious thing!—is that he has adduced not a single argument which could not be just as well applied to democracy in general!

The real source of all his curious logical errors and confusion—and this applies to not only self-determination, but also to defence of the fatherland, divorce, "rights" in general—lies in the oppression of his thinking by the war, which makes him completely distort the Marxist position on democracy.

Imperialism is highly developed capitalism; imperialism is progressive; imperialism is the negation of democracy—

"hence", democracy is "unattainable" under capitalism. Imperialist war is a flagrant violation of all democracy, whether in backward monarchies or progressive republics—"hence", there is no point in talking of "rights" (i. e., democracy!). The "only" thing that can be "opposed" to imperialist war is socialism; socialism alone is "the way out"; "hence", to advance democratic slogans in our minimum programme, i.e., under capitalism, is a deception or an illusion, befuddlement or postponement, etc., of the slogan of socialist revolution.

Though Kievsky does not realise it, that is the real source of all his mishaps. That is his basic logical error which, precisely because it is basic and is not realised by the author, "explodes" at every step like a punctured bicycle tire. It "bursts out" now on the question of defending the fatherland, now on the question of divorce, now in the phrase about "rights", in this remarkable phrase (remarkable for its utter contempt for "rights" and its utter failure to understand the issue): we shall discuss not rights, but the destruction of age-old slavery!

To say that is to show a lack of understanding of the relationship between capitalism and democracy, between socialism and democracy.

Capitalism in general, and imperialism in particular, turn democracy into an illusion—though at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations in the masses, creates democratic institutions, aggravates the antagonism between imperialism's denial of democracy and the mass striving for democracy. Capitalism and imperialism can be over thrown only by economic revolution. They cannot be over thrown by democratic transformations, even the most "ideal". But a proletariat not schooled in the struggle for democracy is

incapable of performing an economic revolution. Capitalism cannot be vanquished without taking over the banks, without repealing private ownership of the means of production. These revolutionary measures, however, cannot be implemented without organising the entire people for democratic administration of the means of production captured from the bourgeoisie, without enlisting the entire mass of the working people, the proletarians, semi-proletarians and small peasants, for the democratic organisation of their ranks, their forces, their participation in state affairs. Imperialist war may be said to be a triple negation of democracy (a. every war replaces "rights" by violence; b. imperialism as such is the negation of democracy; c. imperialist war fully equates the republic with the monarchy), but the awakening and growth of socialist revolt against imperialism are indissolubly linked with the growth of democratic resistance and unrest. Socialism leads to the withering away of every state, consequently also of every democracy, but socialism can be implemented only through the dictator ship of the proletariat, which combines violence against the bourgeoisie, i.e., the minority of the population, with full development of democracy, i.e., the genuinely equal and genuinely universal participation of the entire mass of the population in all state affairs and in all the complex problems of abolishing capitalism.

It is in these "contradictions" that Kievsky, having for gotten the Marxist teaching on democracy, got himself con fused. Figuratively speaking, the war has so oppressed his thinking that he uses the agitational slogan "break out of imperialism" to replace all thinking, just as the cry "get out of the colonies" is used to replace analysis of what, properly speaking, is the

meaning—economically and politically—of the civilised nations "getting out of the colonies".

The Marxist solution of the problem of democracy is for the proletariat to utilise all democratic institutions and aspirations in its class struggle against the bourgeoisie in order to prepare for its overthrow and assure its own victory. Such utilisation is no easy task. To the Economists, Tolstoyans, etc., it often seems an unpardonable concession to "bourgeois" and opportunist views, just as to Kievsky defence of national self-determination "in the epoch of finance capital" seems an unpardonable concession to bourgeois views. Marxism teaches us that to "fight opportunism" by renouncing utilisation of the democratic institutions created and distorted by the bourgeoisie of the given, capitalist, society is to completely surrender to opportunism!

The slogan of civil war for socialism indicates the quickest way out of the imperialist war and links our struggle against the war with our struggle against opportunism. It is the only slogan that correctly takes into account both war-time peculiarities—the war is dragging out and threatening to grow into a whole "epoch" of war—and the general character of our activities as distinct from opportunism with its pacifism, legalism and adaptation to one's "own" bourgeoisie. In addition, civil war against the bourgeoisie is a democratically organised and democratically conducted war of the propertyless mass against the propertied minority. But civil war, like every other, must inevitably replace rights by violence. However, violence in the name of the interests and rights of the majority is of a different nature: it tramples on the "rights" of the exploiters, the bourgeoisie, it is unachievable without democratic organisation

of the army and the "rear". Civil war forcibly expropriates, immediately and first of all, the banks, factories, railways, the big estates, etc. But in order to expropriate all this, we shall have to introduce election of all officials and officers by the people, completely merge the army conducting the war against the bourgeoisie with the mass of the population, completely democratise administration of the food supply, the production and distribution of food, etc. The object of civil war is to seize the banks, factories, etc., destroy all possibility of resistance by the bourgeoisie, destroy its armed forces. But that aim cannot be achieved either in its purely military, oreconomic, or political aspects, unless we, during the war, simultaneously introduce and extend democracy among our armed forces and in our "rear". We tell the masses now (and they instinctively feel that we are right): "They are deceiving you in making you fight for imperialist capitalism in a war disguised by the great slogans of democracy. You must, you shall wage a genuinely democratic war against the bourgeoisie for the achievement of genuine democracy and socialism." The present war unites and "merges" nations into coalitions by means of violence and financial dependence. In our civil war against the bourgeoisie, we shall unite and merge the nations not by the force of the ruble, not by the force of the truncheon, not by violence, but by voluntary agreement and solidarity of the working people against the exploiters. For the bourgeoisie the proclamation of equal rights for all nations has become a deception. For us it will be the truth that will facilitate and accelerate the winning over of all nations. Without effectively organised democratic relations between nations—and, consequently, without freedom of secession—civil war of the workers and working

people generally of all nations against the bourgeoisie is impossible.

Through utilisation of bourgeois democracy to socialist and consistently democratic organisation of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and against opportunism. There is no other path. There is no other way out. Marxism, just as life itself, knows no other way out. We must direct free secession and free merging of nations along that path, not fight shy of them, not fear that this will "defile" the "purity" of our economic aims.

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 23, pages 22-27.

V. I. Lenin

Tasks of the Left Zimmerwaldists in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party

November 1916

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 23, pages 137-148.

The Congress of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party at Zurich (November 4–5, 1916) definitely proved that the decision to join Zimmerwald and accept revolutionary mass struggle (resolution of the 1915 Aarau Congress) remains on paper, and that within the party there has been definitely formed a "Centre", i.e., a trend similar to that of Kautsky-Haase and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft[7] in Germany, and of Longuet-Pressemane and Co. in France. This "Centre", of which R. Grimm has become the head, combines "Left" declarations with "Right", i.e., opportunist, tactics.

It is therefore the task of the Left Zimmerwaldists in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party immediately and effectively to consolidate, their forces in order systematically to influence the party so that the Aarau Congress decision shall not remain a dead letter. Consolidation of their forces is all the more urgent since both the Aarau and Zurich congresses have left no doubt whatever as to the revolutionary and internationalist sympathies of the Swiss proletariat. Resolutions of sympathy for Liebknecht are not enough; there must be serious acceptance of his slogan that the Social-Democratic parties of today need regeneration.

The platform of the Left Zimmerwaldists in the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland should be, approximately, as follows:

I. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE WAR AND TOWARDS THE BOURGEOIS GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL

1. "Defence of the fatherland" on the part of Switzerland in the present imperialist war as well as in the new imperialist wars now in preparation is nothing but a bourgeois deception of the people. For, actually, Switzerland's participation in the present or similar wars would only be participation in a predatory and reactionary war on the side of[1] one of the imperialist coalitions; it would definitely not be a war for "freedom", "democracy", "in dependence", etc.

2. The attitude of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party towards the bourgeois Swiss Government and towards all the Swiss bourgeois parties must be one of utter distrust. For that government (a) is closely bound up, economically and financially, with the bourgeoisie of the imperialist "Great" Powers and is completely dependent upon them; (b) has long ago turned towards political reaction all along the line in international and domestic affairs (political police, servility towards European reaction and European monarchies, etc.); (c) its whole policy over a period of many years (military reorganisation in 1907, etc., the Egli "case", the de Loys "case",[9] etc., etc.) has proved that it is increasingly becoming a pawn in the hands of the most reactionary Swiss military party and military clique.

3. In view of the above, it is the urgent task of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party to expose the true character of the

government, which is cringing before the imperialist bourgeoisie and the militarists, expose its deception of the people by means of phrases about democracy, etc., show the very real possibility of this government (with the approval of the whole of the ruling bourgeoisie in Switzerland) bartering away the interests of the Swiss people to on or the other imperialist coalition.

4. Therefore, in the event of Switzerland's involvement in the present war, it will be the duty of the Social-Democrats absolutely to repudiate "defence of the fatherland" and to expose the use of that slogan to deceive the people. In such a war the workers and peasants would lay down their lives not in their own interests, and not for democracy, but in the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The socialists of Switzerland, as of all other advanced countries, can and must accept military defence of the fatherland only when this fatherland has been reorganised along socialist lines, i.e., defence of the proletarian socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie.

5. Neither in peace nor in war can the Social-Democratic Party and its deputies vote war credits under any circumstances, no matter what deceitful speeches about "defending neutrality", etc., are made to justify such voting.

6. The proletariat's answer to war must be propaganda and the preparation and carrying out of revolutionary mass actions for the overthrow of bourgeois rule, the conquest of political power and the achievement of socialist society, which alone will save mankind from wars. The determination to achieve it is maturing in the minds of the workers of all countries with unprecedented rapidity.

7. Revolutionary action must include demonstrations and mass strikes, but under no circumstances refusal of military service. On the contrary, not refusal to take up arms, but turning these arms against one's own bourgeoisie is the only action that can correspond to the tasks of the proletariat and to the slogans of the best representatives of internationalism, for example, Karl Liebknecht.

8. The Social-Democratic workers must counter the slightest government action, either before entering or during the war, towards abolishing or curtailing political liberties by forming illegal organisations to conduct systematic, persistent propaganda, undaunted by any sacrifices, for war against war, and explain to the masses the real character of the war.

II. THE HIGH COST OF LIVING AND THE INTOLERABLE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE MASSES

9. Not only in the belligerent countries, but in Switzer land too, the war has led to the unprecedented and scandalous enrichment of a handful of rich people and to incredible Want among the masses, resulting from high prices and food shortages. The Social-Democratic Party's main task must be a revolutionary, not reformist, struggle against this calamity: systematic and persistent propaganda and preparation for such a struggle, undeterred by inevitable temporary difficulties and set-backs.

10. In reply to the numerous bourgeois projects of financial reforms, the Social-Democratic Party must make it its main task to expose attempts by the bourgeoisie to shift the burden of mobilisation and war on to the workers and poor peasants.

Under no circumstances, and under no pretext, can Social-Democrats agree to indirect taxation. The decision of the Aarau Congress (1915), and the Huber-Grimm resolution adopted at the Zurich Congress (1916), which permit Social-Democrats to agree to indirect taxes, must be rescinded. All Social-Democratic organisations must forthwith begin most energetically to prepare for the Party Congress in Berne in February 1917, and must elect only delegates who favour rescinding these resolutions.

It is the job of liberal officials, and certainly not of revolutionary Social-Democrats, to help the bourgeois government extricate itself from the present difficulties and preserve the capitalist system, i.e., perpetuate want among the masses.

11. Social-Democrats must propagate as widely as possible among the masses the urgent necessity of introducing a uniform federal property and income tax, with high and progressive scales not tower than the following:

Classification of Tax on persons living in pensions:

Classification of .

12. Social-Democrats must ruthlessly combat the bourgeois lie, spread also by many opportunists in the Social-Democratic Party, that it is "impractical" to advocate revolutionary-high rates of property and income taxation. On the contrary, this is the only practical and the only Social-Democratic policy. First, because we must not adapt our selves to what is "acceptable" to the rich; we must appeal to the broad masses of the poor and propertyless who are indifferent to, or suspicious of, the Social-Democratic Party, largely owing to its reformist and opportunist character. Secondly, the only way of wresting

concessions from the bourgeoisie is not by "bargaining" with it, not by "adapting" ourselves to its interests or prejudices, but by preparing the revolutionary forces of the masses against it. The larger the section of people we convince of the justice of revolutionary high taxation rates and of the need to fight to secure such rates, the sooner will the bourgeoisie make concessions. And we will utilise every concession, however small, in the unswerving struggle for the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

13. The fixing of a maximum salary for all salaried employees and officials, Bundesräte,[2] etc., of 5,000 to 6,000 francs per annum, according to size of family. The prohibition of the accumulation of all other incomes under penalty of imprisonment and confiscation of such incomes.

14. Compulsory alienation of the factories and works—in the first instance of those that are indispensable for supplying the necessities of life to the population and also of all agricultural enterprises of over fifteen hectares (over 40 "Jacharten") in area (in Switzerland there are only 22,000 enterprises of this size out of a total of 252,000, i.e., less than one-tenth of all agricultural enterprises). Systematic measures, on the basis of these reforms, to increase food output and ensure the people a supply of cheap food.

15. Immediate and compulsory alienation by the state of all water power in Switzerland; this, as well as other alienated property, to be subject to the above-mentioned scales of property and income tax.

III. PRESSING DEMOCRATIC REFORMS AND UTILISATION OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE AND PARLIAMENTARISM

16. Utilisation of the Parliamentary tribune and the right of initiative and referendum, not in a reformist manner, in order to advocate reforms "acceptable" to the bourgeoisie, and therefore powerless to remove the principal and fundamental evils suffered by the masses. The aim should be propaganda in favour of Switzerland's socialist transformation, which is quite feasible economically, and is becoming more and more urgently necessary because of the intolerably high cost of living and the oppression of finance capital, and also because the international relations created by the war are impelling the proletariat of the whole of Europe on to the path of revolution.

17. Abolition of all restrictions without exception on the political rights of women compared with those of men. It must be explained to the masses why this reform is particularly urgent at the present time, when the war and the high cost of living are agitating the minds of the broad masses and, in particular, are rousing the interest and the attention of women towards politics.

18. Compulsory naturalisation (Zwangseinbürgerung) of all foreigners, free of charge. Every foreigner shall become a Swiss citizen after three months' residence in the country, unless he, on very good grounds, applies for a postponement, which may be granted for not more than three months. It must be explained to the masses that such a reform is particularly urgent for Switzerland, not only from the general democratic standpoint, but also because, owing to its imperialist environment, Switzerland has a larger percentage of foreigners than any other European country. Nine-tenths of these foreigners speak one of the three languages used in Switzerland. The disfranchisement and alienation of foreign workers serve to increase political

reaction, which is already mounting, and weaken international proletarian solidarity.

19. Immediate propaganda for Social Democratic candidates in the 1917 Nationalrat elections to be nominated only on the basis of a political platform that has been previously widely discussed by the electors. This applies in particular to the question of the attitude towards the war and defence of the fatherland, and the question of reformist or revolutionary struggle against the high cost of living.

IV. THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF PARTY PROPAGANDA, AGITATION AND ORGANISATION

20. Effective operation of the Aarau decision on the revolutionary mass struggle is impossible without systematic and persistent efforts to extend Social-Democratic influence over the masses, without drawing into the movement new strata of the toiling and exploited masses. Propaganda and agitation for the social revolution must be conducted more concretely, more explicitly, and on pressing practical issues. This will make it understood not only by the organised workers, who under capitalism will always remain a minority of the proletariat and of the oppressed classes in general, but also by the majority of the exploited, who are incapable of systematic organisation because of the terrible oppression of capitalism.

21. To influence broader masses, the party must organise more systematic publication of leaflets for free distribution. These should explain to the masses that the revolutionary proletariat is fighting for the socialist transformation of Switzerland, which is necessary for and in the interests of nine-tenths of the

population. Open competitions should be organised between all party branches, particularly the youth organisations, for the best distribution of such leaflets, and street and house-to-house propaganda. More attention and effort must be devoted to propaganda among the rural workers, agricultural labourers and day-labourers, and also among the poor section of peasants who do not exploit hired labour and do not profit, but suffer, from the high cost of living. The party should demand of its parliamentary representatives (National-, Kantons-, Gross-, and other Räte) that they utilise their particularly advantageous political position, not for idle reformist parliamentary talk, which naturally only bores the workers and rouses their suspicion, but for propaganda for the socialist revolution among the most backward strata of the proletariat and semi-proletariat in urban, and particularly rural, areas.

22. A decisive break with the theory of "neutrality" of the industrial organisations of the working class, office employees, etc. A truth most strikingly confirmed by the war should be brought home to the masses, namely, that so-called "neutrality" is bourgeois deception or hypocrisy, that in fact it means passive submission to the bourgeoisie and to such of its particularly disgusting undertakings as imperialist war. Social-Democratic activity in every organisation of the working class and of the poor strata of the petty bourgeoisie or office workers must be intensified. Special Social-Democratic groups must be formed within all such organisations; systematic efforts must be made to create a situation in which revolutionary Social-Democracy shall have the majority in and leadership of these organisations. The special importance of this condition for the success of the revolutionary struggle must be explained to the masses.

23. Social-Democratic work among the troops must be extended and intensified, both before and after the call-up. Social-Democratic groups must be formed in all military units. The historical inevitability and legitimacy, from the standpoint of socialism, of using arms in the only legitimate war, namely, the proletarian war against the bourgeoisie to liberate humanity from wage-slavery, must be explained. There must be propaganda against isolated terrorist actions and for linking up the struggle of the revolutionary section of the army with the broad movement of the proletariat and of the exploited population generally. There must be more intensive propaganda in support of the section of the Olten decision urging soldiers to refuse to obey when troops are used against strikers, and it should be explained that passive disobedience alone is not enough.

24. To explain to the masses the inseparable connection between the practical, consistent, revolutionary Social-Democratic work, as outlined above, and the systematic struggle over principles among the three main trends in the present-day labour movement that have arisen in all civilised countries, and have taken definite shape also in Switzerland (particularly at the 1916 Zurich Congress). These three trends are: (1) the social-patriots who frankly accept "defence of the fatherland" in the present imperialist war of 1914–16; this is an opportunist trend of the agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement; (2) the Left Zimmerwaldists, who, in principle, reject "defence of the fatherland" in the imperialist war. They favour a break with the social-patriots as agents of the bourgeoisie and mass revolutionary struggle, combined with complete reorganisation of Social-Democratic tactics to conform with the propaganda and preparation for such struggle; (3) the so-called "Centre"

(Kautsky-Haase, Arbeitsgemeinschaft in Germany; Longuet-Pressemane in France),[4] which stands for unity between the first and the second trends. Such "unity" only ties the hands of revolutionary Social-Democracy, prevents the development of its activity and corrupts the masses by failure inseparably and completely to link up Party principles and Party practice.

At the 1916 Zurich Congress of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party, in three speeches on the question of the Nationalratsfraktion delivered by Platten, Name and Greulich, there was the very clearly expressed admission that the struggle between the different policy trends within the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland has long since become a fact. The sympathies of the majority of the delegates were obviously with Platten when he spoke of the need consistently to work in the spirit of revolutionary Social-Democracy. Name openly, precisely and definitely declared that two trends were continuously fighting each other within the Nationalratsfraktion, and that the workers' organisations must themselves see to it that adherents of the revolutionary trend who were in complete agreement with each other be elected to the Nationalrat. When Greulich said that the Party had cast off its old "favourites" (Lieblinge) and had found new "favourites", he too thereby admitted the existence and struggle of different trends. But no class-conscious and thinking worker will agree with this "favourites" theory. It is precisely in order to prevent the inevitable and necessary struggle between trends from degenerating into a contest between "favourites", into personal conflicts, petty suspicions and petty scandals that all members of the Social-Democratic Party must see to it that the struggle between the different policy trends is fought openly and on principles.

25. An intensified principled struggle must be waged against the Grütli-Verein[11] as a glaring manifestation on Swiss soil of the tendencies of bourgeois labour politics, namely, opportunism, reformism, social-patriotism and corruption of the masses by bourgeois-democratic illusions. The mistaken and pernicious character of social-patriot and "Centre" policies must be explained to the masses, using the concrete activities of the Grütli-Verein as an example.

26. Preparations must be immediately started for the elections to the February (1917) Party Congress in Berne to ensure that they are held only after every Party organisation has discussed the principles and concrete policies set forth in the various platforms. The platform outlined here should serve as the platform of the consistent, revolutionary, internationalist Social-Democrats.

The election of all leading Party officials, to the Press Commission, to all representative bodies, to all management committees, etc., must take place only on the basis of such a discussion of platforms.

Every local organisation must carefully control the local Party press organ to ensure that it pursues the views and the tactics, not merely of Social-Democracy in general, but of a precisely defined platform of Social-Democratic policy.

V. INTERNATIONAL TASKS OF THE SWISS SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

27. In order that acceptance of internationalism by the Swiss Social-Democrats shall not remain an empty and non-committal phrase—to which the adherents of the "Centre", and Social-Democrats of the epoch of the Second International

generally, always confine themselves—it is necessary, first, consistently and unswervingly to fight for organisational rapprochement between foreign and Swiss workers bringing them together in the same unions, and for their complete equality (civic and political). The specific feature of imperialism in Switzerland is precisely the increasing exploitation of disfranchised foreign workers by the Swiss bourgeoisie, which bases its hopes on estrangement between these two categories of workers.

Second, every effort must be made to create a united internationalist trend among the German, French and Italian workers of Switzerland, a trend that will make for genuine unity in all practical activity in the labour movement and will combat, with equal determination and on principle, French (in Latin Switzerland), German and Italian social-patriotism. The present platform should be made the basis of a common and united platform of the workers of all three main nationalities or languages in Switzerland. Unless worker supporters of revolutionary Social-Democracy belonging to all the nationalities of Switzerland are united in this way, internationalism will remain an idle word.

To facilitate this amalgamation, the publication should be started of supplements (even if weekly [monthly] and only two pages at first) to all Social-Democratic newspapers (and to all periodicals put out by workers', office employees', etc., trade unions). The supplements should be published in three languages and should explain the present platform in the light of current political developments.

28. The Swiss Social-Democrats must support in all other socialist parties only the revolutionary-internationalist forces,

the forces that accept the Zimmerwald Left. This support must not remain platonic. It is particularly important to reprint in Switzerland the anti-government manifestos secretly issued in Germany, France and Italy, translate them into all three languages and distribute them among the workers in Switzerland and all the neighbouring countries.

29. At the Berne (February 1917) Congress the Swiss Social-Democratic Party must not only unreservedly accept the Kienthal Conference decisions, but must also demand an immediate and complete organisational break with the International Socialist Bureau at The Hague, that bulwark of opportunism and social-patriotism, which are irreconcilably hostile to the interests of socialism.

30. The Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland is in a particularly favourable position to keep in touch with developments in the labour movement in the advanced European countries and unite its revolutionary elements. The Party must not, therefore, wait passively for an internal struggle to develop within that movement, but must keep in advance of that struggle. In other words, it must follow the road of the Zimmerwald Left, the correctness of which is being proved more clearly every day by the course of events in the socialist movements of Germany, France, England, the United States and all civilised countries in general.

V. I. Lenin

NOTEBOOK "ζ"

("ZETA")

JUNIUS, THE CRISIS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY 1915

Junius, The Crisis of Social-Democracy. Supplement: "Theses on the Tasks of International Social-Democracy." Zurich, 1916, 109pp. (105–09,theses).

"Introduction" dated January 2, 1916: the pamphlet is stated to have been written in April 1915.

p. 6: "The capitulation of international Social-Democracy ... the most stupid thing would be to conceal it"....

p. 24: "Two lines of development ... lead ... to this war." 1) 1870, N.B., the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, and 2) imperialist development in the last 25 years.

|| N.B. p. 28: B\"ulow's speech on December 11, 1899. A clear imperialist programme: the British have "Greater Britain", the French their "New France", the Russians—Asia, the Germans "Greater Germany".

pp. 31–33: excellent account of the plunder of Turkish peasants in Asia Minor by German finance capital.

p. 42: ..."The existence of only two countries—Belgium and Serbia—is at stake in the present war".

p. 43: In Russia, imperialism is "not" so much "economic expansion" as "the political interest of the state".

p. 48: The break-up of Austria was accelerated "by the emergence of independent national states in the immediate neighbourhood of the monarchy"....

..."The internal un-viability of Austria was shown"....

..."The Hapsburg monarchy is not the political organisation of a bourgeois state, but only the loose syndicate of cliques of social parasites"....

|| ..."An inevitable dilemma: either the Hapsburg monarchy or the capitalist development of the Balkan countries" .... ||

N.B. ||| ..."Historically, the liquidation of Austria-Hungary is but the continuation of the disintegration of Turkey, but at the same time it is a requirement of the historical process of development" (49–50).

"German imperialism, chained to two decomposing corpses, steered straight into the world war" (50).

..."For ... an alleged attempt (at high treason)... Duala Manga Bell of the Cameroons was hanged quietly, amidst the noise of war, without the troublesome procedure of a court trial.... The Reichstag group shrouded the body of Chief Duala in a discreet silence" .

p. 60: two causes of the 1905 defeat:

? ||| (1) its "huge" political programme; "some (of the problems), such as the agrarian question, are altogether insoluble within the framework of the present social order"....

(2) the aid of European reaction....

|| 71: “The dangers to the ‘free development of Germany’ do not lie in Russia, as the Reichstag group thought, but in Germany herself”... (and, incidentally, the expression: “the Zabern policy”, p. 71).

74: “Does not the socialist principle of the right of nations to self-determination imply that every people is entitled and bound to defend its freedom and independence?”... “certainly, a people that surrenders to an external enemy is contemptible”....

75: A quotation from The Civil War in France: “The highest heroic effort of which old society is still capable is national war; and this is now proved to be a mere governmental humbug”....

76: “In bourgeois society, therefore, invasion and class struggle are not opposites, as the official legend has it, but one is the means and expression of the other. And if for the ruling classes invasion represents a well-tried means against the class struggle, for the ascending classes the sharpest class struggle still proves to be the best means against invasion”.... The history of the Italian towns in the Middle Ages, and especially 1793.

||| 77: The same applies to self-determination: “True, socialism recognises the right of every nation to independence and freedom, to independent mastery of its destinies. But it is a real mockery of socialism when the modern capitalist states are presented as the | expression of this right of the nations to self-determination. In which of these states has the nation yet determined the forms and conditions of its (sic!) || national, political or social existence?” By “self-determination of the German people”, Marx, Engels, Lassalle under stood “the united, great German republic”. [Modern Germany has been

built (N.B.) (77) “on the ruins of the German people’s right to national (N.B.) self-determination (N.B.)”....]

77 ...“or is it, perhaps, the Third Republic with colonial possessions in four continents, and colonial atrocities in two of them, that is an expression of the ‘self-determination’ of the French nation?”...

78: “In the socialist sense of this concept, there is not a single free nation, if its existence as a state rests on the enslavement of other peoples, || N.B. for the colonial peoples, too, are reckoned as peoples and as members of the state. International socialism recognises the right of free, independent and equal nations, but it is only socialism that can create such nations, and only it can realise the right of nations to self-determination. And this socialist slogan serves like all the other socialist slogans not to justify the existing order of things, but to indicate the way forward, and to stimulate the proletariat in its active, revolutionary policy of transformation”....

? ||| In the imperialist situation of today there cannot be any more “national wars of defence” (78)... to ignore this situation means “to build on sand”.

Hence “the question of defence and attack, the question of who is to ‘blame’, is quite meaningless” (78); for both France and Great Britain it is not a matter of “self-defence”, they are defending “not their national, but their world political position”....

[TOP-RIGHT{DOUBLE}-BOTTOM BOX ENDS:] [[N.B.: ...“in order to dispel the phantom of ‘national war’ which dominates Social—Democratic policy at present” .]]

Imperialist policy is an international phenomenon, the result of "the world-wide development of capital" (79).... "It is only from this starting-point that the question of 'national defence' in the present war can be correctly posed" (80).... The system of alliances, military interests, etc., immediately involve imperialist interests and countries.... "Finally, the very fact that today all capitalist states have colonial possessions which in time of war, even if it begins as a 'national war of defence', are in any case drawn into the war from military-strategic considerations" ... the "holy war" in Turkey, the instigation of uprisings in the colonies...—"this fact, too, today automatically converts every war into an imperialist world conflagration" ....

The example of Serbia (behind which stands Russia), Holland (her colonies and so forth).... "In this way, it is always the historical situation created by present-day imperialism that determines the character of the war for the different countries, and it is because of this situation that nowadays national wars of defence are in general no longer possible" ....

He quotes K. Kautsky: Patriotism and Social-Democracy, 1907, p. 16 in particular, that "under these conditions a war for the defence of national freedom can no longer be expected anywhere" (Kautsky, quoted by Junius, p. 85). (K. Kautsky, pp. 12–14 on "national problems", that they can be solved "only (N.B.) after (N.B.) the victory of the proletariat".) [K. Kautsky, p. 23. N.B.]

What then is the task of Social-Democracy? Not to be "passive". |||| ? "Instead of hypocritically dressing the imperialist war in the cloak of national defence, we should take seriously [author's italics] the right of nations to self-determination and national defence and use them as a revolutionary lever against [author's

italics] the imperialist war (85). The most elementary requirement of national defence is that the nation should take defence into its own hands. The first step in that direction is a militia, i.e., not merely immediate arming of the entire adult male population, but above all the decision by the people of the question of war and peace; ||| ??? N.B. || it implies also immediate abolition of all political disfranchisement, since the people's defence must be based on the greatest political freedom. And it was the prime duty of Social-Democracy to proclaim these genuine national defence measures, and strive for their realisation" . But the Social-Democrats abandoned the demand for a militia until after the war!!! although we have said that "only a militia" is capable of defending the fatherland!!!

"Our teachers had a different conception of defence of the fatherland"... (Marx in The Civil War, in support of the national war of the Commune)... and ... Frederick Engels in 1892, in support of a repetition of 1793.... |||| N.B. || But alongside this: "When Engels wrote that, he had in mind a situation quite different from the present one" (87)—prior to the Russian revolution. "He [Engels] had in mind a genuine national war of defence by a suddenly attacked Germany" ....

||| ?? And further: "Yes, it is the duty of the Social-Democrats to defend their country during a great historical crisis. And precisely therein lies the grave guilt" of the Social-Democratic Reichstag group.... ||| ?? "They did leave the fatherland unprotected in the hour of its greatest peril. For their first duty to the fatherland in that hour was to show the fatherland what was really behind the present imperialist war; N.B. |||| to sweep away the web of patriotic and diplomatic lies covering up this encroachment on the fatherland; to proclaim loudly and

clearly that for the German people both victory and defeat in the present war are equally fatal...; to proclaim the necessity of immediately arming the people and of allowing the people to decide the question of war and peace ... finally, to oppose the imperialist war programme, which is to preserve Austria and Turkey, i.e., perpetuate reaction in Europe and in Germany, with the old, truly national programme of the patriots a nd democrats of 1848, the programme of Marx, ??? ||||| Engels and Lassalle—the slogan of a united, great German Republic. This is the banner that should have been unfurled before the country, which would have been a truly national banner of liberation, and which would |||| have been in accord with the best traditions of Germany and with the international class policy of the proletariat" .

__ 100: | ..."Hence, the grave dilemma—the interests of the fatherland or the international solidarity of the proletariat—the tragic conflict which prompted our parliamentarians to side, 'with a heavy heart', with the imperialist war, is purely imaginary, a bourgeois-nationalist fiction. On the contrary, there is complete harmony between the interests of the country and the class interests of the proletarian International, both in time of war and in time of peace: both war and peace demand the most energetic development of the class struggle, the most determined fight for the Social-Democratic programme" ....

[DITTO: |] But what should the Party have done? Call a mass strike? Or call for refusal to serve in the army? It would be absurd to try to answer. The revolution cannot be "made". "Prescriptions and recipes of a technical nature" would be "ridiculous" (90); it is not a question of such things, but of a

clear political slogan. (Expatiates against technique, etc., etc., "small conspiratorial circles", etc.) (N.B. 101–02).

|| | __ § VIII (93-104) deals especially with the question of "victory or defeat", endeavours to prove that both are equally bad (ruin, new wars, etc.). To choose between them would be "a hopeless choice between two lots of thrashing" (98)... "except in one single case: if by its revolutionary intervention the international proletariat upsets all the calculations" (of both imperialisms) (98).... There can be no status quo (99), no going "backwards", only forward to the victory of the proletariat. Not hare brained schemes of disarmament, not "utopias" or "partial reforms" (99), but the struggle against imperialism.

p. 102—the threat of "mass collapse of ||| but America?? and Japan?? the European proletariat" (102).... "When the hour strikes, the signal for the social revolution that will set mankind free will come only from Europe, only from the oldest capitalist countries. Only the British, French, Belgian, German, Russian and Italian workers together can lead the army of the exploited and enslaved in the five continents of the world" (103).

Lenin, Collected Works V 22,
1916

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

The socialist revolution is not a single act, it is not one battle on one front, but a whole epoch of acute class conflicts, a long series of battles on all fronts, i.e., on all questions of economics and politics, battles that can only end in the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It would be a radical mistake to think that the struggle for democracy was capable of diverting the proletariat from the socialist revolution or of hiding, overshadowing it, etc. On the contrary, in the same way as there can be no victorious socialism that does not practise full democracy, so the proletariat cannot prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie without an all-round, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy.

It would be no less a mistake to remove one of the points of the democratic programme, for example, the point on the self-determination of nations, on the grounds of it being "impracticable" or "illusory" under imperialism. The contention that the right of nations to self-determination is impracticable within the bounds of capitalism can be understood either in the absolute, economic sense, or in the conditional, political sense.

In the first case it is radically incorrect from the standpoint of theory. First, in that sense, such things as, for example, labour money, or the abolition of crises, etc., are impracticable under capitalism. It is absolutely untrue that the self-determination of nations is equally impracticable. Secondly, even the one example of the secession of Norway from Sweden in 1905 is

sufficient to refute "impracticability" in that sense. Thirdly, it would be absurd to deny that some slight change in the political and strategic relations of, say, Germany and Britain, might today or tomorrow make the formation of a new Polish, Indian and other similar state fully "practicable". Fourthly, finance capital, in its drive to expand, can "freely" buy or bribe the freest democratic or republican government and the elective officials of any, even an "independent", country. The domination of finance capital and of capital in general is not to be abolished by any reforrns in the sphere of political democracy; and self-determination belongs wholly and exclusively to this sphere. This domination of finance capital, however, does not in the least nullify the significance of political democracy as a freer, wider and clearer form of class oppression and class struggle. Therefore all arguments about the "impracticability", in the economic sense, of one of the demands of political democracy under capitalism are reduced to a theoretically incorrect definition of the general and basic relationships of capitalism and of political democracy as a whole.

In the second case the assertion is incomplete and inaccurate. This is because not only the right of nations to self determination, but all the fundamental demands of political democracy are only partially "practicable" under imperialism, and then in a distorted form and by way of exception (for example, the secession of Norway from Sweden in 1905). The demand for the immediate liberation of the colonies that is put forward by all revolutionary Social-Democrats is also "impracticable" under capitalism without a series of revolutions. But from this it does not by any means follow that Social-Democracy should reject the immediate and most determined struggle for all these demands -- such a rejection

would only play into the hands of the bourgeoisie and reaction -- but, on the contrary, it follows that these demands must be formulated and put through in a revolutionary and not a reformist manner, going beyond the bounds of bourgeois legality, breaking them down, going beyond speeches in parliament and verbal protests, and drawing the masses into decisive action, extending and intensifying the struggle for every fundamental democratic demand up to a direct proletarian onslaught on the bourgeoisie, i.e., up to the socialist revolution that expropriates the bourgeoisie. The socialist revolution may flare up not only through some big strike, street demonstration or hunger riot or a military insurrection or colonial revolt, but also as a result of a political crisis such as the Dreyfus case or the Zabern incident, or in connection with a referendum on the secession of an oppressed nation, etc.

Increased national oppression under imperialism does not mean that Social-Democracy should reject what the bourgeoisie call the "utopian" struggle for the freedom of nations to secede but, on the contrary, it should make greater use of the conflicts that arise in this sphere, too, as grounds for mass action and for revolutionary attacks on the bourgeoisie.

Lenin To: INESSA ARMAND

December 23, 1916

Collected Works, Volume 35, pages 264-265.

Dear Friend,

About Radek. You write: "I told him at Kienthal that he had behaved badly."

Is that all? Only that! What about the political conclusion?? Or was his action only an accident?? Only his personal affair?? Nothing of the kind! There is the source of your political mistake. You do not assess what is going on politically. Yet really this is a question of politics, however strange it might seem at first sight.

As regards defence of the fatherland. It would be most unpleasant for me if we differed on this. Let us try once more to come to agreement.

Here is some "material for reflection":

War is the continuation of politics.

Everything depends on the system of political relations before the war and during the war.

The main types of these systems are (a) the relation of the oppressed nation to the oppressing, (b) the relation between two oppressing nations on account of the loot, its division, etc., (c) the relation of a national state which does not oppress others to one which oppresses, to a particularly reactionary state.

Think over this.

Caesarism in France + tsarism in Russia against non-imperialist Germany in 1891—that was the historical situation in 1891.

Think over that! And I was writing of 1891 in No. 1 of Sbornik as well.[1]

How glad I am that you have had a talk with Guilbeaux and Levi! It would be a good thing to do this more frequently, or at any rate from time to time. As for the Italian, he is lying! Turati's speech is a model of rotten Kautskianism (he has dragged "droits nationaux" into the imperialist war!!). And the article by bb about this speech in Volksrecht is rotten too.

Oh, how I would like to write about this, or to have a talk with the Italian!!

How stupid that Levi is attacking parliamentarism!! Stupid!! And a "Left", too!! God, how much muddle there is in people's heads.

Yours,

Lenin

The second revolution in Russia (February to October 1917).

V. I. Lenin

A Proletarian Militia

Pravda No. 36, May 3 (April 20), 1917.

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 24, pages 179-182.

On April 14 our paper [Pravda] published a report from a correspondent in Kanavino, Nizhni-Novgorod Gubernia, to the effect that "a workers' militia paid for by the factory managements has been introduced at practically all the factories".

Kanavino district, our correspondent reports, has sixteen factories and about thirty thousand workers, not counting railway employees. The organisation of a workers' militia paid for by the capitalists therefore embraces a considerable number of the largest enterprises in the locality.

The organisation of a workers' militia to be paid for by the capitalists is a measure of tremendous—it will be no exaggeration to say, gigantic and decisive—importance, both practically and in principle. The revolution cannot be made safe, its gains cannot be assured, its further development is impossible,until this measure has become general, until it is carried through all over the country.

The bourgeois and landowner republicans, who turned republican after they saw that it was impossible to rule the people otherwise, are trying to establish a republic that would

be as monarchical as possible; something like that in France, which Shchedrin called a republic without republicans.

At the present time, when the landowners and capitalists have come to realise the strength of the revolutionary masses, the most important thing for them is to safeguard the most essential institutions of the old regime, to safeguard the old instruments of oppression: the police, the bureaucracy, the standing army. They are trying to reduce the "civil militia" to an institution of the old type, i.e., to small detachments of armed men standing apart from the people and as close as possible to the bourgeoisie and under the command of men from among the bourgeoisie.

The minimum programme of the Social-Democrats calls for the replacement of the standing army by a universal arming of the people. Most of the official Social-Democrats in Europe and most of our own Menshevik leaders, however, have "forgotten" or put aside the Party's programme, substituting chauvinism ("defencism") for internationalism, reformism for revolutionary tactics.

Yet now of all times, at the present revolutionary moment, it is most urgent and essential that there be a universal arming of the people. To assert that, while we have a revolutionary army, there is no need to arm the proletariat, or that there would "not be enough" arms to go round, is mere deception and trickery. The thing is to begin organising a universal militia straight away, so that everyone should learn the use of arms even if there is "not enough" to go round, for it is not at all necessary that the people have enough weapons to arm everybody. The people must learn, one and all, how to use arms, they must

belong, one and all, to the militia which is to replace the police and the standing army.

The workers do not want an army standing apart from the people; what they want is that the workers and soldiers should merge into a single militia consisting of all the people.

Failing this, the apparatus of oppression will remain in force, ready today to serve Guchkov and his friends, the counter-revolutionary generals, and tomorrow Radko Dmitriev or some pretender to the throne and builder of a plebiscite monarchy.

The capitalists need a republic now, because they cannot "manage" the people otherwise. But what they need is a "parliamentary" republic, i.e., one where democracy would be limited to democratic elections, to the right of sending to parliament individuals who, as Marx aptly remarked, represent the people and oppress the people.

The opportunists of contemporary Social-Democracy, who have substituted Scheidemann for Marx, have memorised the rule that parliamentarism "should be utilised" (which is absolutely correct), but have forgotten what Marx taught concerning proletarian democracy as distinguished from bourgeois parliamentarism.

The people need a republic in order to educate the masses in the methods of democracy. We need not only representation along democratic lines, but the building of the entire state administration from the bottom up by the masses themselves, their effective participation in all of life's steps, their active role in the administration. Replacement of the old organs of oppression, the police, the bureaucracy, the standing army, by a universal arming of the people, by a really universal militia,

is the only way to guarantee the country a maximum of security against the restoration of the monarchy and to enable it to go forward firmly, systematically and resolutely towards socialism, not by "introducing" it from above, but by raising the vast mass of proletarians and semi-proletarians to the art of state administration, to the use of the whole state power.

Public service through a police standing above the people, through bureaucrats, who are the most faithful servants of the bourgeoisie, and through a standing army under the command of landowners and capitalists—that is the ideal of the bourgeois parliamentary republic, which is out to perpetuate the rule of Capital.

Public service through a really universal people's militia, composed of men and women, a militia capable partly of replacing the bureaucrats—this, combined with the principle of elective office and displaceability of all public officers, with payment for their work according to proletarian, not "master-class", bourgeois standards, is the ideal of the working class.

This ideal has not only become a part of our programme, it has not only won a place in the history of the labour movement in the West, namely, in the experience of the Paris Commune; it has not only been evaluated, stressed, explained and recommended by Marx, but it was actually put into practice by the Russian workers in the years 1905 and 1917.

The Soviets of Workers' Deputies, in point of significance, in point of the type of government they create, are institutions of precisely that kind of democracy which does away with the old organs of oppression, and takes the road of a universal militia.

But how can the militia be made universal when the proletarians and semi-proletarians are herded in the factories, crushed by unbearable labour for the landowners and the capitalists?

There is only one way: the workers' militia must be paid for by the capitalists.

The capitalists must pay the workers for the hours and days which they give to public service.

This reliable method is being adopted by the working masses themselves. The example of the Nizhni-Novgorod workers should become a model for all Russia.

Comrade workers, make the peasants and the rest of the people see the need for a universal militia in place of the police and the old bureaucracy! Introduce such and only such a militia! Introduce it through the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, through the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, through the organs of local self-government that fall into the hands of the working class. Do not under any circumstances be content with a bourgeois militia. Draw the women into public service on an equal footing with the men. See to it that the capitalists pay the workers for days devoted to public service in the militia!

Learn the methods of democracy by actual practice, right now, on your own, from the bottom up—rouse the masses to effective, immediate, universal participation in government—this and this alone will assure the full triumph of the revolution and its unswerving, purposeful and systematic advance.

The state and revolution

August - September 1917

Source: Collected Works, Volume 25, p. 381-492

Abolition of Parliamentarism

"The Commune," Marx wrote, "was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time....

"Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress [ver- and zertreten] the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people constituted in communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for workers, foremen and accountants for his business."

Owing to the prevalence of social-chauvinism and opportunism, this remarkable criticism of parliamentarism, made in 1871, also belongs now to the "forgotten words" of Marxism. The professional Cabinet Ministers and parliamentarians, the traitors to the proletariat and the "practical" socialists of our day, have left all criticism of parliamentarism to the anarchists, and, on this wonderfully reasonable ground, they denounce all criticism of parliamentarism as "anarchism"!! It is not surprising that the proletariat of the "advanced" parliamentary countries, disgusted with such "socialists" as the Scheidemanns, Davids, Legiens, Sembats, Renaudels, Hendersons, Vanderveldes, Staunings, Brantings, Bissolatis, and Co., has been with increasing frequency giving its sympathies to anarcho-

syndicalism, in spite of the fact that the latter is merely the twin brother of opportunism.

For Marx, however, revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase, the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and others have made of it. Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly for its inability to make use even of the "pigsty" of bourgeois parliamentarism, especially when the situation was obviously not revolutionary; but at the same time he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuinely revolutionary proletarian criticism.

To decide once every few years which members of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament--this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary- constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.

But if we deal with the question of the state, and if we consider parliamentarism as one of the institutions of the state, from the point of view of the tasks of the proletariat in this field, what is the way out of parliamentarism? How can it be dispensed with?

Once again, we must say: the lessons of Marx, based on the study of the Commune, have been so completely forgotten that the present-day "Social-Democrat" (i.e., present-day traitor to socialism) really cannot understand any criticism of parliamentarism other than anarchist or reactionary criticism.

The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the elective principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into "working" bodies. "The Commune was to be a working,

not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time."

"A working, not a parliamentary body"--this is a blow straight from the shoulder at the present-day parliamentarian country, from America to Switzerland, from France to Britain, Norway and so forth--in these countries the real business of “state” is performed behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, chancelleries, and General Staffs. parliament is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the "common people". This is so true that even in the Russian republic, a bourgeois-democratic republic, all these sins of parliamentarism came out at once, even before it managed to set up a real parliament. The heroes of rotten philistinism, such as the skobelevs and tseretelis, the Chernovs and Avksentyevs, have even succeeded in polluting the Soviets after the fashion of the most disgusting bourgeois parliamentarism, in converting them into mere talking shops. In the Soviets, the “socialist” Ministers are fooling the credulous rustics with phrase-mongering and resolutions. In the government itself a sort of permanent shuffle is going on in order that, on the one hand, as many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as possible may in turn get near the “pie”, the lucrative and honorable posts, and that, on the other hand, the “attention” of the people may be “engaged”. meanwhile the chancelleries and army staffs “do” the business of “state”.

Dyelo Naroda, the organ of the ruling Socialist-Revolutionary Party, recently admitted in a leading article--with the matchless frankness of people of "good society", in which “all” are engaged in political prostitution - that even in the ministeries headed by the “socialists” (save the mark!), the whole

bureaucratic apparatus is in fact unchanged, is working in the old way and quite “freely” sabotaging revolutionary measures! Even without this admission, does not the actual history of the participation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the government prove this? It is noteworthy, however, that in the ministerial company of the Cadets, the Chernovs, Rusanovs, Zenzinovs, and other editors of Dyelo Naroda have so completely lost all sense of shame as to brazenly assert, as if it were a mere bagetelle, that in “their” ministeries everything is unchanged!! Revolutionary-democratic phrases to gull the rural Simple Simons, and bureaucracy and red tape to "gladden the hearts" of the capitalists--that is the essence of the “honest” coalition.

The Commune substitutes for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion does not degenerate into deception, for the parliamentarians themselves have to work, have to execute their own laws, have themselves to test the results achieved in reality, and to account directly to their constituents. Representative institutions remain, but there is no parliamentarism here as a special system, as the division of labor between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for the deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and must imagine democracy without parliamentarism, if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere words for us, if the desire to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our earnest and sincere desire, and not a mere “election” cry for catching workers' votes, as it is with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and also the Scheidemanns and Legiens, the Smblats and Vandervelde.

It is extremely instructive to note that, in speaking of the function of those officials who are necessary for the Commune and for proletarian democracy, Marx compares them to the workers of "every other employer", that is, of the ordinary capitalist enterprise, with its "workers, foremen, and accountants".

There is no trace of utopianism in Marx, in the sense that he made up or invented a “new” society. No, he studied the birth of the new society out of the old, and the forms of transition from the latter to the former, as a mass proletarian movement and tried to draw practical lessons from it. He “Learned” from the Commune, just as all the great revolutionary thinkers learned unhesitatingly from the experience of great movements of the oppressed classes, and never addressed them with pedantic “homilies” (such as Plekhanov's: "They should not have taken up arms" or Tsereteli's: "A class must limit itself").

Abolishing the bureaucracy at once, everywhere and completely, is out of the question. It is a utopia. But to smash the old bureaucratic machine at once and to begin immediately to construct a new one that will make possible the gradual abolition of all bureaucracy--this is not a utopia, it is the experience of the Commune, the direct and immediate task of the revolutionary proletariat.

Capitalism simplifies the functions of “state” administration; it makes it possible to cast “bossing” aside and to confine the whole matter to the organization of the proletarians (as the ruling class), which will hire "workers, foremen and accountants" in the name of the whole of society.

We are not utopians, we do not “dream” of dispensing at once with all administration, with all subordination. These anarchist dreams, based upon incomprehension of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship, are totally alien to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, serve only to postpone the socialist revolution until people are different. No, we want the socialist revolution with people as they are now, with people who cannot dispense with subordination, control, and "foremen and accountants".

The subordination, however, must be to the armed vanguard of all the exploited and working people, i.e., to the proletariat. A beginning can and must be made at once, overnight, to replace the specific “bossing” of state officials by the simple functions of "foremen and accountants", functions which are already fully within the ability of the average town dweller and can well be performed for "workmen's wages".

We, the workers, shall organize large-scale production on the basis of what capitalism has already created, relying on our own experience as workers, establishing strict, iron discipline backed up by the state power of the armed workers. We shall reduce the role of state officials to that of simply carrying out our instructions as responsible, revocable, modestly paid "foremen and accountants" (of course, with the aid of technicians of all sorts, types and degrees). This is our proletarian task, this is what we can and must start with in accomplishing the proletarian revolution. Such a beginning, on the basis of large-scale production, will of itself lead to the gradual "withering away" of all bureaucracy, to the gradual creation of an order--an order without inverted commas, an order bearing no similarity to wage slavery--an order under which the functions of control and accounting, becoming more

and more simple, will be performed by each in turn, will then become a habit and will finally die out as the special functions of a special section of the population.

A witty German Social-Democrat of the seventies of the last century called the postal service an example of the socialist economic system. This is very true. At the present the postal service is a business organized on the lines of state-capitalist monopoly. Imperialism is gradually transforming all trusts into organizations of a similar type, in which, standing over the "common" people, who are overworked and starved, one has the same bourgeois bureaucracy. But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. Once we have overthrown the capitalists, crushed the resistance of these exploiters with the iron hand of the armed workers, and smashed the bureaucratic machinery of the modern state, we shall have a splendidly-equipped mechanism, freed from the "parasite", a mechanism which can very well be set going by the united workers themselves, who will hire technicians, foremen and accountants, and pay them all, as indeed all "state" officials in general, workmen's wages. Here is a concrete, practical task which can immediately be fulfilled in relation to all trusts, a task whose fulfilment will rid the working people of exploitation, a task which takes account of what the Commune had already begun to practice (particularly in building up the state).

To organize the whole economy on the lines of the postal service so that the technicians, foremen and accountants, as well as all officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "a workman's wage", all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat--that is our immediate aim. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the

preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the laboring classes of the bourgeoisie's prostitution of these institutions.

V. I. Lenin

Heroes of Fraud and the Mistakes of the Bolsheviks

September 22, 1917

Rabochy Put No. 19

The so-called Democratic Conference is over. Thank God, one more farce is behind us and still we are advancing, provided fate has no more than a certain number of farces in store for our revolution.

In order correctly to judge the political results of the Conference, we must attempt to ascertain its precise class significance as indicated by objective facts.

Further break-up of the government parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; their obvious loss of the majority among the revolutionary democrats; one more step towards linking up Mr. Kerensky and Messrs. Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. and exposing the Bonapartism they share—such is the class significance of the Conference.

In the Soviets, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have lost their majority. They therefore have had to resort to a fraud—they have violated their pledge to call a new congress of the Soviets in three months. They have evaded reporting back to those who elected the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets; and they have rigged the "Democratic" Conference. The Bolsheviks spoke of this fraud prior to the Conference, and the results fully confirmed their correctness. The Lieberdans and the Tseretelis, Chernovs and Co. saw that their majority in the Soviets was dwindling, therefore they resorted to a fraud.

Arguments like that which says that co-operatives and also "properly" elected city and Zemstvo representatives "are already of great significance among the democratic organisations", are so flimsy that it is nothing but crass hypocrisy to advance them seriously. First of all, the Central Executive Committee was elected by the Soviets, and its refusal to deliver a report and relinquish office to the Soviets, is a Bonapartist fraud. Secondly, the Soviets represent revolutionary democracy insofar as they are joined by those who wish to fight in a revolutionary way. Their doors are not closed to members of the co-operatives and city dwellers. Those same Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks ran the Soviets.

Those who remained only in the co-operatives, who confined themselves only to municipal (city and Zemstvo) work, voluntarily separated themselves from the ranks of revolutionary democracy, thereby attaching themselves to a democracy that was either reactionary or neutral. Everybody knows that co-operative and municipal work is done not only by revolutionaries, but also by reactionaries; everybody knows that people are elected to co-operatives and municipalities primarily for work that is not of general political scope and importance.

The aim of the Lieberdans, Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. when they rigged the Conference was to bring up reserves secretly from among the adherents of Yedinstvo and "non-partisan" reactionaries. That was the fraud they perpetrated. That was their Bonapartism, which allies them with the Bonapartist Kerensky. They robbed democracy while hypocritically keeping up democratic appearances—this is the essence of the matter.

Nicholas II stole, figuratively, large sums from democracy. He convened representative institutions but gave the landowners a hundredfold greater representation than the peasants. The Lieberdans, Tseretelis, and Chernovs steal petty sums from democracy; they convoke a Democratic Conference where both workers and peasants point with full justice to the curtailment of their representation, to lack of proportionality, to discrimination in favour of members of the co-operatives and municipal councils closest to the bourgeoisie (and reactionary democracy).

The Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs have parted ways with the masses of poor workers and peasants. They saved themselves by the fraud that keeps their Kerensky going.

The demarcation of classes is progressing. A protest is growing in the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, a direct split is maturing because the "leaders" have betrayed the interests of the majority of the population. The leaders are relying on the support of a minority, in defiance of the principles of democracy. Fraud is inevitable as far as they are concerned.

Kerensky is revealing himself more and more as a Bonapartist. He was considered a Socialist-Revolutionary. Now we know that he is not merely a "March" Socialist-Revolutionary who ran over to them from the Trudoviks "for advertising purposes". He is an adherent of Breshko-Breshkovskaya, the Socialist-Revolutionary Mrs. Plekhanov, or Mrs. Potresov in their Dyen. The so-called Right wing of the so-called socialist parties, the Plekhanovs, Breshkovskayas, Potresovs, is where Kerensky belongs ; this wing, however, does not differ substantially from the Cadets in anything.

The Cadets have good reason to praise Kerensky. He pursues their policies and confers with them and with Rodzyanko behind the back of the people ; he has been exposed by Chernov and others as conniving with Savinkov, a friend of Kornilov's. Kerensky is a Kornilovite ; by sheer accident he has had a quarrel with Kornilov himself, but he remains in the most intimate alliance with other Kornilovites. This is a fact, proved by the revelations about Savinkov, by Dyelo Naroda and by the continuation of the political game, Kerensky's "ministerial leapfrog" with the Kornilovites disguised under the name of the "commercial and industrial class".

Secret pacts with the Kornilov gang, secret hobnobbing (through Tereshchenko and Co.) with the imperialist "Allies"; secret obstruction and sabotage of the Constituent Assembly; secret deception of the peasants by way of service to Rodzyanko, i.e., the landowners (by doubling the price of bread)—this is what Kerensky is really doing. This is his class policy. This is his Bonapartism.

To conceal this from the Conference, the Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs had to resort to a fraud.

The Bolshevik participation in this hideous fraud, in this farce, had the same justification as their participation in the Third Duma ; even in a "pigsty" we must uphold our line, even from a "pigsty" we must send out material exposing the enemy for the instruction of the people.

The difference, however, is this, that the Third Duma was convened when the revolution was obviously ebbing, while at present there is an obvious upsurge of a new revolution ; of the

scope and the pace of this upsurge, however, we unfortunately know very little.

* * *

The most characteristic episode of the Conference was, in my opinion, Zarudny's speech. He tells us that as soon as Kerensky "as much as hinted" at reorganising the government, all the ministers began to hand in their resignations. "The following day," continues the naïve, childishly naÃ¯ve (a good thing if he is only naïve), Zarudny, "the following day, notwithstanding our resignation, we were called, we were consulted, and finally we were prevailed upon to stay."

"General laughter in the hall," remarks at this point the official Izvestia.

Gay folk, those participants in the Bonapartist deception of the people by the republicans. We are all revolutionary democrats—no joking!

"From the very beginning," says Zarudny, "we heard two things; we were to strive to make the army capable of fighting, and to hasten peace on a democratic basis. Well, as far as peace is concerned, I do not know whether, during the six weeks I have been a member of the Provisional Government, the Provisional Government has done anything about it. I did not notice it. (Applause and a voice from the audience : "It did nothing", Izvestia remarks.) When I, as a member of the Provisional Government, inquired about it, I received no reply. . . ."

Thus speaks Zarudny, according to the report of the official Izvestia. And the Conference listen in silence, tolerate such

things, do not stop the orator, do not interrupt the session, do not jump to their feet and chase out Kerensky and the government! How could they? These "revolutionary democrats" are for Kerensky to a man!

Very well, gentlemen, but then, wherein does the term "revolutionary democrat" differ from the terms "lackey" and "scoundrel"?

It is natural that these lackeys are capable of roaring with laughter when "their" Minister, noted for his rare naivety or rare stupidity, tells them how Kerensky keeps removing and replacing ministers (in order to come to terms with the Kornilov gang behind the hack of the people and "in full privacy"). It is not surprising that the lackeys keep silent when "their" Minister, who seems to have taken general phrases about peace seriously without seeing their hypocrisy, admits that he did not even receive a reply to his question about real steps towards peace. Such is the fate of lackeys, to allow themselves to be fooled by the government. But what has this to do with revolution, what has it to do with democracy?

Would it be surprising if revolutionary soldiers and workers were to get the idea that it would be good if the ceiling of the Alexandrinsky Theatre were to fall and crush all that gang of pitiful scoundrels who can sit there in silence when it is being demonstrated to them that Kerensky and Co. are fooling them with their talk about peace, who can roar with laughter when they are told as clearly as can be by their own ministers that ministerial leapfrog is a farce (concealing Kerensky's dealings with the Kornilovites). God save us from our friends, we can cope with our enemies ourselves! God save us from these

claimants to revolutionary democratic leadership, we can cope with the Kerenskys, Cadets and Kornilovites ourselves!

* * *

And now I come to the errors of the Bolsheviks. To have confined themselves to ironic applause and exclamations at such a moment was an error.

The people are weary of vacillations and delays. Dissatisfaction is obviously growing. A new revolution is approaching. The reactionary democrats, the Lieberdans, Tseretelis and others, wish only to distract the attention of the people with their farce of a "conference", keep them busy with it, cut the Bolsheviks off from the masses, and provide the Bolshevik delegates with the unworthy occupation of sitting and listening to the Zarudnys! And the Zarudnys are not the least sincere of them!

The Bolsheviks should have walked out of the meeting in protest and not allowed themselves to be caught by the conference trap set to divert the people's attention from serious questions. The Bolsheviks should have left two or three of their 136 delegates for "liaison work", that is, to report by telephone the moment the idiotic babbling came to an end and the voting began. They should not have allowed themselves to be kept busy with obvious nonsense for the obvious purpose of deceiving the people with the obvious aim of extinguishing the growing revolution by wasting time on trivial matters.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Bolshevik delegation ought to have gone to the factories and barracks; that was the proper place for delegates who had come from all ends of Russia and who, after Zarudny's speech, could see the full depth of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik rottenness. There, closer to the

masses, at hundreds and thousands of meetings and talks, they ought to have discussed the lessons of this farcical conference whose obvious purpose was only to give a respite to the Kornilovite Kerensky and make it easier for him to try new variations of the "ministerial leapfrog" game.

The Bolsheviks, it turned out, had a wrong attitude to parliamentarism in moments of revolutionary (and not constitutional) crises, an incorrect attitude to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

How it happened can be understood—history made a very sharp turn at the time of the Kornilov revolt. The Party failed to keep pace with the incredibly fast tempo of history at this turning-point. The Party allowed itself to be diverted, for the time being, into the trap of a despicable talking-shop.

They should have left one hundredth of their forces for that talking-shop and devoted ninety-nine hundredths to the masses.

If the turn taken by history called for a compromise with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (personally I believe it did) the Bolsheviks should have proposed it clearly, openly and speedily, so that they could immediately turn to account the possible and probable refusal of the Bonapartist Kerensky's friends to agree to a compromise with them.

The refusal was already indicated by articles in Dyelo Naroda and Rabochaya Gazeta on the eve of the Conference. The masses should have been told as officially, openly and clearly as possible, they should have been told without the loss of a minute, that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had rejected our offer of a compromise—Down with the Socialist-

Revolutionaries and Mensheviks! The Conference could have afforded "to laugh" at the naïveté of Zarudny to the accompaniment of this slogan in the factories and barracks!

The atmosphere of a certain enthusiasm for the Conference and the situation surrounding it seems to have been built up from various sides. Comrade Zinoviev made a mistake in writing about the Commune so ambiguously (ambiguously, to say the least) that it appeared that the Commune, although victorious in Petrograd, might be defeated as in France in 1871. This is absolutely untrue. If the Commune were victorious in Petrograd it would be victorious throughout Russia. It was a mistake on his part to write that the Bolsheviks did right in proposing a proportional composition for the Presidium of the Petrograd Soviet. The revolutionary proletariat would never do anything worth while in the Soviet as long as the Tseretelis were allowed proportional participation; to let them in meant depriving ourselves of the opportunity to work, it meant the ruin of Soviet work. Comrade Kamenev was wrong in delivering the first speech at the Conference in a purely "constitutional" spirit when he raised the foolish question of confidence or non-confidence in the government. If, at such a meeting, it was not possible to tell the truth about the Kornilovite Kerensky that had already been told both in Rabochy Put and the Moscow Sotsial-Demokrat,why not refer to those papers and make it well known to the masses that the Conference did not want to listen to the truth about the Kornilovite Kerensky?

It was a mistake on the part of the Petrograd workers' delegations to send speakers to such a conference after Zarudny had spoken and the situation had been made clear. Why cast

pearls before Kerensky's friends? Why divert the attention of proletarian forces to a farcical conference? Why did those delegations not go quite peacefully and legally to the barracks and the more backward factories? That would have been a million times more useful, essential, serious and to the point than the journey to the Alexandrinsky Theatre and chats with co-operators who sympathise with Yedinstvo and Kerensky.

Ten soldiers or ten workers from a backward factory who have become politically enlightened are worth a thousand times more than a hundred delegates hand-picked from various delegations by the Lieberdans. Parliamentarism should be used, especially in revolutionary times, not to waste valuable time over representatives of what is rotten, but to use the example of what is rotten to teach the masses.

Why should those same proletarian delegations not "use" the Conference to publish, say, two posters explaining that the Conference is a farce and to display them in barracks and factories? One of the posters could depict Zarudny in a fool's cap, dancing on the stage and singing the song "Kerensky sacked us, Kerensky took us back". Around him stand Tsereteli, Chernov, Skobelev and a co-operator arm-in-arm with Lieber and Dan, all rolling with laughter. Caption—They are Happy.

Poster number two. Zarudny again in front of the same audience saying "I asked about peace for six weeks. I got no answer". The audience is silent, their faces express "statesmanlike importance". Tsereteli looks particularly important as he writes in his notebook "What a fool that Zarudny is! The imbecile should be carting dung instead of being a minister. He is an advocate of the coalition and undermines it worse than a hundred Bolsheviks! He was a

minister but he never learned to speak like one, he should have said, 'I continuously followed the campaign for peace for six weeks and I am fully convinced of its final success precisely under the coalition government in accordance with the great idea of Stockholm, etc., etc.' Then even Russkaya Volya would have praised Zarudny as the knight of the Russian revolution."

Caption: "Revolutionary-democratic" conference of male prostitutes.

Written before the end of the Conference; change the first phrase to something like "In all essentials the so-called Democratic. . . ."

V. I. Lenin

From A Publicist's Diary

The Mistakes Of Our Party

September 22-24, 1917

Proletarskaya Revolutsia No. 3 (26), 1924

The more one reflects on the meaning of the so-called Democratic Conference, and the more attentively one observes from outside— and it is said that the bystander sees most—the more firmly convinced one becomes that our Party committed a mistake by participating in it. We should have boycotted it. One may ask if there is any use in analysing such a question since the past cannot be remedied. Such an objection to criticising the tactics of yesterday, however, would be clearly unfounded. We have always condemned, and as Marxists we must condemn, the tactics of those who live "from hand to mouth". Momentary success is not enough for us. In general, plans calculated for a minute or a day are not enough for us. We must constantly test ourselves by a study of the chain of political events in their entirety, in their causal connection, in their results. By analysing the errors of yesterday, we learn to avoid errors today and tomorrow.

A new revolution is obviously maturing in the country, a revolution of other classes (other than those that carried out the revolution against tsarism). At that time it was a revolution of the proletariat, the peasantry and the bourgeoisie in alliance with Anglo-French finance capital against tsarism.

The revolution now maturing is one of the proletariat and the majority of the peasants, more specifically, of the poor peasants, against the bourgeoisie, against its ally, Anglo-French finance capital and against its government apparatus headed by the Bonapartist Kerensky.

At the moment we shall not dwell on the facts testifying to the rise of a new revolution, since, judging by the articles in Rabochy Put, our Central Organ, the Party has already made clear its views on this point. The new revolutionary upsurge seems to be a phenomenon commonly recognised by the Party. Data on this process of maturing, of course, still have to be summarised, but they must form the subject of other articles.

At the present moment it is more important to call the closest attention to the class differences between the old revolution and the new, to weigh up the political situation and our tasks from the point of view of this basic fact, class relations. At the time of the first revolution the vanguard was formed by the workers and soldiers, i.e., by the proletariat and the advanced sections of the peasantry.

This vanguard carried along not only many of the worst vacillating elements of the petty bourgeoisie (remember the indecision of the Mensheviks and Trudoviks on the question of a republic), but also the monarchist party of the Cadets, the liberal bourgeoisie, thereby making it a republican party. Why was such a change possible?

Because economic domination is everything to the bourgeoisie, and the form of political domination is of very little importance; the bourgeoisie can rule just as well under a republic, its domination is even more certain under a republic, in the sense

that under a republican political order, no changes in the composition of the government or in the composition and the grouping of the ruling parties affect the bourgeoisie.

Of course, the bourgeoisie stood for and will stand for a monarchy, because the cruder armed protection of capital by monarchist institutions is more obvious and "closer" to all the capitalists and landowners. However, under a strong pressure "from below", the bourgeoisie has always and everywhere "reconciled" itself to a republic, as long as it could maintain its economic domination.

The relation of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, i.e., the majority of the people, in respect of the bourgeoisie and Allied (and world) imperialism is such that it is impossible for them to "carry " the bourgeoisie with them. Moreover, the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie and the more well-to-do strata of the democratic petty bourgeoisie are patently against a new revolution. This fact is so obvious that there is no need to dwell on it here. The Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs illustrate this most clearly.

The class relations have changed. This is the crux of the matter.

Different classes now stand "on the one and the other side of the barricade".

That is the main thing.

That, and that alone, is the scientific reason for speaking of a new revolution which—arguing purely theoretically, taking the question in the abstract—could be accomplished legally if, for instance, the Constituent Assembly, convoked by the bourgeoisie, produced a majority opposed to the bourgeoisie, if

the majority belonged to the parties of the workers and poor peasants.

The objective relations of the classes, their role (economic and political) outside and inside representative institutions of the given type; the rise or decline of the revolution; the relation of extra-parliamentary to parliamentary means of struggle—these are the chief, the basic objective facts which must be considered if the tactics of boycott or participation are to be deduced in a Marxist way and not arbitrarily, according to our "sympathies".

The experience of our revolution clearly demonstrates how to approach the boycott question in a Marxist way.

Why did the boycott of the Bulygin Duma prove correct tactics?

Because it was in accordance with the objective alignment of social forces in their development. It provided the maturing revolution with a slogan for the overthrow of an old order which, to distract the people from the revolution, was convoking a clumsily fabricated compromise institution (the Bulygin Duma) which did not show promise of any earnest "anchoring" in parliamentarism. The extra-parliamentary means of struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry were stronger. These are the elements that went into shaping the correct tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma, tactics which took account of the objective situation.

Why did the tactics of boycotting the Third Duma prove incorrect?

Because they were based only on the "catchiness" of the boycott slogan and on the revulsion felt towards the brutal reaction of the June Third "pigsty". The objective situation, however, was

such that on the one hand the revolution was in a state of collapse and declining fast. For the upsurge of the revolution a parliamentary base (even inside a "pigsty") was of tremendous political importance, since extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation were almost nonexistent or extremely weak. On the other hand, the most openly reactionary nature of the Third Duma did not prevent it from being an organ reflecting real class relations, namely, the Stolypin combination of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. This new relation of classes was something the country had to get rid of.

These very elements shaped the tactics of participation in the Third Duma that took proper account of the objective situation.

It is sufficient to give thought to these lessons gained from experience and the conditions required by a Marxist approach to the question of boycott or participation, to realise that participation in the Democratic Conference, the Democratic Council or the Pre-parliament would be wrong tactics.

On the one hand, a new revolution is maturing. The war is on the upgrade. The extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation are tremendous. The "parliamentary" tribune in the given Pre-parliament is insignificant. On the other hand, this Pre-parliament neither reflects nor serves a new relation of classes; for instance, the peasantry is here more poorly represented than in the already existing organs (Soviets of Peasants' Deputies). The Pre-parliament is in substance a Bonapartist fraud, not only because the filthy gang of the Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs, together with Kerensky and Co. have given this Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma a fake, hand-picked composition, but also more

profoundly because the only aim of the Pre-parliament is to trick the masses, to deceive the workers and peasants, to distract them from the new upsurge of the revolution, to dazzle the eyes of the oppressed classes by a new dress for the old, long tried-out, bedraggled, threadbare "coalition" with the bourgeoisie (i.e., the bourgeoisie's transformation of Tsereteli and Co. into jesters helping to subordinate the people to imperialism and the imperialist war).

"We are weak now," said the tsar in August 1905 to his feudal landowners. "Our power is wavering. The tide of the workers' and peasants' revolution is rising. We must trick the 'plain man', we must dangle something before his eyes. . . ."

"We are weak now," says the present "tsar", the Bonapartist Kerensky, to the Cadets, the non-party Tit Tityches, Plekhanovs, Breshkovskayas and Co. "Our power is tottering. A wave of workers' and peasants' revolution against the bourgeoisie is rising. We must hoodwink the democrats by dying in new colours that jester's costume which the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik 'leaders of revolutionary democracy', our dear friends the Tseretelis and Chernovs, have been wearing to fool the people since May 6, 1917. We can easily dangle a 'Pre-parliament' before their eyes."

"We are strong now," said the tsar to his feudal landowners in June 1907. "The wave of workers' and peasants' revolution is receding, but we cannot maintain ourselves as of old; deception alone will not suffice. We must have a new policy in the village, we must have a new economic and political bloc with the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, with the bourgeoisie."

It is in this way that the three situations, August 1905, September 1917, and June 1907, may be presented to illustrate most vividly the objective basis for the boycott tactics and its connection with class relations. The oppressed classes are always being deceived by the oppressors, but the meaning of this deception differs at different moments in history. Tactics cannot be based on the bare fact that the oppressors deceive the people; tactics must be shaped after analysing class relations in their entirety and the development of both extra-parliamentary and parliamentary struggle.

Participation in the Pre-parliament is incorrect tactics that does not correspond to the objective relations of classes, to the objective conditions of the moment.

We should have boycotted the Democratic Conference; we all erred by not doing so, but mistakes are no crime. We shall correct the mistake only if we have a sincere desire to support the revolutionary struggle of the masses, only if we give earnest thought to the objective foundations of our tactics.

We must boycott the Pre-parliament. We must leave it and go to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, to the trade unions, to the masses in general. We must call on them to struggle. We must give them a correct and clear slogan: disperse the Bonapartist gang of Kerensky and his fake Pre-parliament, with this Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, even after the Kornilov revolt, refused to accept our compromise of peacefully transferring the power to the Soviets (in which we then had no majority); they have again sunk into the morass of filthy and mean bargaining with the Cadets. Down with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries! Struggle against them ruthlessly. Expel them

ruthlessly from all revolutionary organisations. No negotiations, no communication with those friends of the Kishkins, the friends of the Kornilovite landowners and capitalists.

Saturday, September 23.

Trotsky was for the boycott. Bravo, Comrade Trotsky!Boycottism was defeated in the Bolshevik group at the Democratic Conference.

Long live the boycott!

We cannot and must not under any circumstances reconcile ourselves to participation. A group at one of the conferences is not the highest organ of the party and even the decisions of the highest organs are subject to revision on the basis of experience.

We must at all costs strive to have the boycott question solved both at a plenary meeting of the Executive Committee and at an extraordinary Party congress. The boycott question must now be made the platform for elections to the Congress and for all elections inside the Party. We must draw the masses into the discussion of this question. Class-conscious workers must take the matter into their own hands, organise the discussion, and exert pressure on "those at the top".

There is not the slightest doubt that at the "top" of our Party there are noticeable vacillations that may become ruinous, because the struggle is developing; under certain conditions, at a certain moment, vacillations may ruin the cause. We must put all our forces into the struggle, we must uphold the correct line of the party of the revolutionary proletariat before it is too late.

Not all is well with the "parliamentary" leaders of our Party; greater attention must be paid to them, there must be greater workers' supervision over them; the competency of parliamentary groups must be more clearly defined.

Our Party's mistake is obvious. The fighting party of the advanced class need not fear mistakes. What it should fear is persistence in a mistake, refusal to admit and correct a mistake out of a false sense of shame.

Sunday, September 24.

The Congress of Soviets has been postponed till October 20. The tempo of Russian life is such that this almost means postponing it to the Greek Calends. The farce staged by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks after April 20-21 is being repeated for the second time.

V. I. Lenin

The State: A Lecture Delivered at the Sverdlov University

July 11, 1919

Pravda No. 15, January 18, 1929

Comrades, according to the plan you have adopted and which has been conveyed to me, the subject of today's talk is the state. I do not know how familiar you are already with this subject. If I am not mistaken your courses have only just begun and this is the first time you will be tackling this subject systematically. If that is so, then it may very well happen that in the first lecture on this difficult subject I may not succeed in making my exposition sufficiently clear and comprehensible to many of my listeners. And if this should prove to be the case, I would request you not to be perturbed by the fact, because the question of the state is a most complex and difficult one, perhaps one that more than any other has been confused by bourgeois scholars, writers and philosophers. It should not therefore be expected that a thorough understanding of this subject can be obtained from one brief talk, at a first sitting. After the first talk on this subject you should make a note of the passages which you have not understood or which are not clear to you, and return to them a second, a third and a fourth time, so that what you have not understood may be further supplemented and elucidated later, both by reading and by various lectures and talks. I hope that we may manage to meet once again and that we shall then be able to exchange opinions on all supplementary questions and see what has remained most unclear. I also hope that in addition to talks and lectures you Will devote some time to reading at least a few of the most

important works of Marx and Engels. I have no doubt that these most important works are to be found in the lists of books and in the handbooks which are available in your library for the students of the Soviet and Party school; and although, again, some of you may at first be dismayed by the difficulty of the exposition, I must again warn you that you should not let this worry you; what is unclear at a first reading will become clear at a second reading, or when you subsequently approach the question from a somewhat different. angle. For I once more repeat that the question is so complex and has been so confused by bourgeois scholars and writers that anybody who desires to study it seriously and master it independently must attack it several times, return to it again and again and consider it from various angles in order to attain a clear, sound understanding of it. Because it is such a fundamental, such a basic question in all politics, and because not only in such stormy and revolutionary times as the present, but even in the most peaceful times, you will come across it every day in any newspaper in connection with any economic or political question it will be all the easier to return to it. Every day, in one context or another, you will be returning to the question: what is the state, what is its nature, what is its significance and what is the attitude of our Party, the party that is fighting for the overthrow of capitalism, the Communist Party—what is its attitude to the state? And the chief thing is that you should acquire, as a result of your reading, as a result of the talks and lectures you will hear on the state, the ability to approach this question independently, since you will be meeting with it on the most diverse occasions, in connection with the most trifling questions, in the most unexpected contexts and in discussions and disputes with opponents. Only when you learn to find your

way about independently in this question may you consider yourself sufficiently confirmed in your convictions and able with sufficient success to defend them against anybody and at any time.

After these brief remarks, I shall proceed to deal with the question itself—what is the state, how did it arise and fundamentally what attitude to the state should be displayed by the party of the working class, which is fighting for the complete overthrow of capitalism—the Communist Party?

I have already said that you are not likely to find another question which has been so confused, deliberately and unwittingly, by representatives of bourgeois science, philosophy, jurisprudence, political economy and journalism, as the question of the state. To this day it is very often confused with religious questions; not only those professing religious doctrines (it is quite natural to expect it of them), but even people who consider themselves free from religious prejudice, very often confuse the specific question of the state with questions of religion and endeavour to build up a doctrine—very often a complex one, with an ideological, philosophical approach and argumentation—which claims that the state is something divine, something supernatural, that it is a certain force by virtue of which mankind has lived, that it is a force of divine origin which confers on people, or can confer on people, or which brings with it something that is not of man, but is given him from without. And it must be said that this doctrine is so closely bound up with the interests of the exploiting classes—the landowners and the capitalists—so serves their interests, has so deeply permeated all the customs, views and science of the gentlemen who represent the bourgeoisie, that

you will meet with vestiges of it on every hand, even in the view of the state held by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, although they are convinced that they can regard the state with sober eyes and reject indignantly the suggestion that they are under the sway of religious prejudices. This question has been so confused and complicated because it affects the interests of the ruling classes more than any other question (yielding place in this respect only to the foundations of economic science). The doctrine of the state serves to justify social privilege, the existence of exploitation, the existence of capitalism—and that is why it would be the greatest mistake to expect impartiality on this question, to approach it in the belief that people who claim to be scientific can give you a purely scientific view on the subject. In the question of the state, in the doctrine of the state, in the theory of the state, when you have become familiar with it and have gone into it deeply enough, you will always discern the struggle between different classes, a struggle which is reflected or expressed in a conflict of views on the state, in the estimate of the role and significance of the state.

To approach this question as scientifically as possible we must cast at least a fleeting glance back on the history of the state, its emergence and development. The most reliable thing in a question of social science, and one that is most necessary in order really to acquire the habit of approaching this question correctly and not allowing oneself to get lost in the mass of detail or in the immense variety of conflicting opinion—the most important thing if one is to approach this question scientifically is not to forget the underlying historical connection, to examine every question from the standpoint of how the given phenomenon arose in history and what were the

principal stages in its development, arid, from the standpoint of its development, to examine what it has become today.

I hope that in studying this question of the state you will acquaint yourselves with Engels's book The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. This is one of the fundamental works of modern socialism, every sentence of which can be accepted with confidence, in the assurance that it has not been said at random but is based on immense historical and political material. Undoubtedly, not all the parts of this work have been expounded in an equally popular and comprehensible way; some of them presume a reader who already possesses a certain knowledge of history and economics. But I again repeat that you should not be perturbed if on reading this work you do not understand it at once. Very few people do. But returning to it later, when your interest has been aroused, you will succeed —in understanding the greater part, if not the whole of it. I refer to this book because it gives the correct approach to the question in the sense mentioned. It begins with a historical sketch of the origin of the state.

This question, like every other—for example, that of the origin of capitalism, the exploitation of man by man, socialism, how socialism arose, what conditions gave rise to it—can be approached soundly and confidently only if we cast a glance back on the history of its development as a whole. In connection with this problem it should first of all be noted that the state has not always existed. There was a time when there was no state. It appears wherever and whenever a division of society into classes appears, whenever exploiters and exploited appear.

Before the first form of exploitation of man by man arose, the first form of division into classes—slave-owners and slaves—

there existed the patriarchal family, or, as it is sometimes called, the clan family. (Clan-tribe; at the time people of one kin lived together.) Fairly definite traces of these primitive times have survived in the life of many primitive peoples; and if you take any work whatsoever on primitive civilisation, you will always come across more or less definite descriptions, indications and recollections of the fact that there was a time, more or less similar—to primitive communism, when the division of society into slave-owners and slaves did not exist. And in those times there was no state, no special apparatus for the systematic application of force and the subjugation of people by force. It is such an apparatus that is called the state.

In primitive society, when people lived in small family groups and were still at the lowest stages of development, in a condition approximating to savagery—an epoch from which modern, civilised human society is separated by several thousand years—there were yet no signs of t e existence of a state. We find the predominance of custom, authority, respect, the power enjoyed by the elders of the clan; we find this power sometimes accorded to women the position of women then was not like the downtrodden and oppressed condition of women today—but nowhere do we find a special category of people set apart to rule others and who, for the sake and purpose of rule, systematically and permanently have at their disposal a certain apparatus of coercion, an apparatus of violence, such as is represented at the present time, as you all realise, by armed contingents of troops, prisons and other means of subjugating the will of others by force—all that which constitutes the essence of the state.

If we get away from what are known as religious teachings, from the subtleties, philosophical arguments and various opinions advanced by bourgeois scholars, if we get away from these and try to get at the real core of the matter, we shall find that the state really does amount to such an apparatus of rule which stands outside society as a whole. When there appears such a special group of men occupied solely with government, and who in order to rule need a special apparatus of coercion to subjugate the will of others by force—prisons, special contingents of men, armies, etc.—then there appears the state.

But there was a time when there was no state, when general ties, the community itself, discipline and the ordering of work were maintained by force of custom and tradition, by the authority or the respect enjoyed by the elders of the clan or by women—who in those times not only frequently enjoyed a status equal to that of men, but not infrequently enjoyed an even higher status—and when there was no special category of persons who were specialists in ruling. History shows that the state as a special apparatus for coercing people arose wherever and whenever there appeared a division of society into classes, that is, a division into groups of people some of which were permanently in a position to appropriate the labour of others, where some people exploited others.

And this division of society into classes must always be clearly borne in mind as a fundamental fact of history. The development of all human societies for thousands of years, in all countries without exception, reveals a general conformity to law, a regularity and consistency; so that at first we had a society without classes—the original patriarchal, primitive society, in which there were no aristocrats; then we had a

society based on slavery—a slaveowning society. The whole of modern, civilised Europe has passed through this stage—slavery ruled supreme two thousand years ago. The vast majority of peoples of the other parts of the world also passed through this stage. Traces of slavery survive to this day among the less developed peoples; you will find the institution of slavery in Africa, for example, at the present time. The division into slaveowners and slaves was the first important class division. The former group not only owned all the means of production—the land and the implements, however poor and primitive they may have been in those times—but also owned people. This group was known as slave-owners, while those who laboured and supplied labour for others were known as slaves.

This form was followed in history by another—feudalism. In the great majority of countries slavery in the course of its development evolved into serfdom. The fundamental division of society was now into feudal lords and peasant serfs. The form of relations between people changed. The slave-owners had regarded the slaves as their property; the law had confirmed this view and regarded the slave as a chattel completely owned by the slave-owner. As far as the peasant serf was concerned, class oppression and dependence remained, but it was not considered that the feudal lord owned the peasants as chattels, but that he was only entitled to their labour, to the obligatory performance of certain services. In practice, as you know, serfdom, especially in Russia where it survived longest of all and assumed the crudest forms, in no way differed from slavery.

Further, with the development of trade, the appearance of the world market and the development of money circulation, a new class arose within feudal society—the capitalist class. From the commodity, the exchange of commodities and the rise of the power of money, there derived the power of capital. During the eighteenth century, or rather, from the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth century, revolutions took place all over the world. Feudalism was abolished in all the countries of Western Europe. Russia was the last country in which this took place. In 1861 a radical change took place in Russia as well; as a consequence of this one form of society was replaced by another—feudalism was replaced by capitalism, under which division into classes remained, as well as various traces and remnants of serfdom, but fundamentally the division into classes assumed a different form.

The owners of capital, the owners of the land and the owners of the factories in all capitalist countries constituted and still constitute an insignificant minority of the population who have complete command of the labour of the whole people, and, consequently, command, oppress and exploit the whole mass of labourers, the majority of whom are proletarians, wage-workers, who procure their livelihood in the process of production only by the sale of their own worker's hands, their labour-power. With the transition to capitalism, the peasants, who had been disunited and downtrodden in feudal times, were converted partly (the majority) into proletarians, and partly (the minority) into wealthy peasants who themselves hired labourers and who constituted a rural bourgeoisie.

This fundamental fact—the transition of society from primitive forms of slavery to serfdom and finally to capitalism—you must

always bear in mind, for only by remembering this fundamental fact, only by examining all political doctrines placed in this fundamental scheme, will you be able properly to appraise these doctrines and understand what they refer to; for each of these great periods in the history of mankind, slave-owning, feudal and capitalist, embraces scores and hundreds of centuries and presents such a mass of political forms, such a variety of political doctrines, opinions and revolutions, that this extreme diversity and immense variety (especially in connection with the political, philosophical and other doctrines of bourgeois scholars and politicians) can be understood only by firmly holding, as to a guiding thread, to this division of society into classes, this change in the forms of class rule, and from this standpoint examining all social questions—economic, political, spiritual, religious, etc.

If you examine the state from the standpoint of this fundamental division, you will find that before the division of society into classes, as I have already said, no state existed. But as the social division into classes arose and took firm root, as class society arose, the state also arose and took firm root. The history of mankind knows scores and hundreds of countries that have passed or are still passing through slavery, feudalism and capitalism. In each of these countries, despite the immense historical changes that have taken place, despite all the political vicissitudes and all the revolutions due to this development of mankind, to the transition from slavery through feudalism to capitalism and to the present world-wide struggle against capitalism, you will always discern the emergence of the state. It has always been a certain apparatus which stood outside society and consisted of a group of people engaged solely, or almost solely, or mainly, in ruling. People are divided into the

ruled, and into specialists in ruling, those who rise above society and are called rulers, statesmen. This apparatus, this group of people who rule others, always possesses certain means of coercion, of physical force, irrespective of whether this violence over people is expressed in the primitive club, or in more perfected types of weapons in the epoch of slavery, or in the firearms which appeared in the Middle Ages, or, finally, in modern weapons, which in the twentieth century are technical marvels and are based entirely on the latest achievements of modern technology. The methods of violence changed, but whenever there was a state there existed in every society a group of persons who ruled, who commanded, who dominated and who in order to maintain their power possessed an apparatus of physical coercion, an apparatus of violence, with those weapons which corresponded to the technical level of the given epoch. And by examining these general phenomena, by asking ourselves why no state existed when there were no classes, when there were no exploiters and exploited, and why it appeared when classes appeared—only in this way shall we find a definite answer to the question of what is the nature and significance of the state.

The state is a machine for maintaining the rule of one class over another. When there were no classes in society, when, before the epoch of slavery, people laboured in primitive conditions of greater equality, in conditions when the productivity of labour was still at its lowest, and when primitive man could barely procure the wherewithal for the crudest and most primitive existence, a special group of people whose function is to rule and to dominate the rest of society, had not and could not yet have emerged. Only when the first form of the division of society into classes appeared, only when slavery appeared,

when a certain class of people, by concentrating on the crudest forms of agricultural labour, could produce a certain surplus, when this surplus was not absolutely essential for the most wretched existence of the slave and passed into the hands of the slave-owner, when in this way the existence of this class of slave-owners was secure—then in order that it might take firm root it was necessary for a state to appear.

And it did appear—the slave-owning state, an apparatus which gave the slave-owners power and enabled them to rule over the slaves. Both society and the state were then on a much smaller scale than they are now, they possessed incomparably poorer means of communication—the modern means of communication did not then exist. Mountains, rivers and seas were immeasurably greater obstacles than they are now, and the state took shape within far narrower geographical boundaries. A technically weak state apparatus served a state confined within relatively narrow boundaries and with a narrow range of action. Nevertheless,. there did exist an apparatus which compelled the slaves to remain in slavery, which kept one part of society subjugated to and oppressed by another. It is impossible to compel the greater part of society to work systematically for the other part of society without a permanent apparatus of coercion. So long as there were no classes, there was no apparatus of this sort. When classes appeared, everywhere and always, as the division grew and took firmer hold, there also appeared a special institution—the state. The forms of state were extremely varied. As early as the period of slavery we find diverse forms of the state in the countries that were the most advanced, cultured and civilised according to the standards of the time—for example, in ancient Greece and Rome which were based entirely on slavery. At that

time there was already a difference between monarchy and republic, between aristocracy and democracy. A monarchy is the power of a single person, a republic is the absence of any non-elected authority; an aristocracy is the power of a relatively small minority, a democracy is the power of the people (democracy in Greek literally means the power of the people). All these differences arose in the epoch of slavery. Despite these differences, the state of the slave-owning epoch was a slave-owning state, irrespective of whether it was a monarchy or a republic, aristocratic or democratic.

In every course on the history of ancient times, in any lecture on this subject, you will hear about the struggle which was waged between the monarchical and republican states. But the fundamental fact is that the slaves were not regarded as human beings—not only were they not regarded as citizens, they were not even regarded as human beings. Roman law regarded them as chattels. The law of manslaughter, not to mention the other laws for the protection of the person, did not extend to slaves. It defended only the slaveowners, who were alone recognised as citizens with full rights. But whether a monarchy was instituted or a republic, it was a monarchy of the slave-owners or a republic of the slave-owners. All rights were enjoyed by the slave-owners, while the slave was a chattel in the eyes of the law; and not only could any sort of violence be perpetrated against a slave, but even the killing of a slave was not considered a crime. Slave-owning republics differed in their internal organisation, there were aristocratic republics and democratic republics. In an aristocratic republic only a small number of privileged persons took part in the elections; in a democratic republic everybody took part but everybody meant only the slave-owners, that is, everybody except the slaves. This

fundamental fact must be borne in mind, because it throws more light than any other on the question of the state and clearly demonstrates the nature of the state.

The state is a machine for the oppression of one class by another, a machine for holding in obedience to one class other, subordinated classes. There are various forms of this machine. The slave-owning state could be a monarchy, an aristocratic republic or even a democratic republic. In fact the forms of government varied extremely, but their essence was always the same: the slaves enjoyed no rights and constituted an oppressed class; they were not regarded as human beings. We find the same thing in the feudal state.

The change in the form of exploitation transformed the slave-owning state into the feudal state. This was of immense importance. In slave-owning society the slave enjoyed no rights whatever and was not regarded as a human being; in feudal society the peasant was bound to the soil. The chief distinguishing feature of serfdom was that the peasants (and at that time the peasants constituted the majority; the urban population was still very small) were considered bound to the land—this is the very basis of "serfdom". The peasant might work a definite number of days for himself on the plot assigned to him by the landlord; on the other days the peasant serf worked for his lord. The essence of class society remained—society was based on class exploitation. Only the owners of the land could enjoy full rights; the peasants had no rights at all. In practice their condition differed very little from the condition of slaves in the slave-owning state. Nevertheless, a wider road was opened for their emancipation, for the emancipation of the peasants, since the peasant serf was not regarded as the direct

property of the lord. He could work part of his time on his own plot, could, so to speak, belong to himself to some extent; and with the wider opportunities for the development of exchange and trade relations the feudal system steadily disintegrated and the scope of emancipation of the peasantry steadily widened. Feudal society was always more complex than slave society. There was a greater development of trade and industry, which even in those days led to capitalism. In the Middle Ages feudalism predominated. And here too the forms of state varied, here too we find both the monarchy and the republic, although the latter was much more weakly expressed. But always the feudal lord was regarded as the only ruler. The peasant serfs were deprived of absolutely all political rights.

Neither under slavery nor under the feudal system could a small minority of people dominate over the vast majority without coercion. History is full of the constant attempts of the oppressed classes to throw off oppression. The history of slavery contains records of wars of emancipation from slavery which lasted for decades. Incidentally, the name "Spartacist" now adopted by the German Communists—the only German party which is really fighting against the yoke of capitalism—was adopted by them because Spartacus was one of the most prominent heroes of one of the greatest revolts of slaves, which took place about two thousand years ago. For many years the seemingly omnipotent Roman Empire, which rested entirely on slavery, experienced the shocks and blows of a widespread uprising of slaves who armed and united to form a vast army under the leadership of Spartacus. In the end they were defeated, captured and put to torture by the slave-owners. Such civil wars mark the whole history of the existence of class society. I have just mentioned an example of the greatest of

these civil wars in the epoch of slavery. The whole epoch of feudalism is likewise marked by constant uprisings of the peasants. For example, in Germany in the Middle Ages the struggle between the two classes—the landlords and the serfs—assumed wide proportions and was transformed into a civil war of the peasants against the landowners. You are all familiar with similar examples of repeated uprisings of the peasants against the feudal landowners in Russia.

In order to maintain their rule and to preserve their power, the feudal lords had to have an apparatus by which they could unite under their subjugation a vast number of people and subordinate them to certain laws and regulations; and all these laws fundamentally amounted to one thing—the maintenance of the power of the lords over the peasant serfs. And this was the feudal state, which in Russia, for example, or in quite backward Asiatic countries (where feudalism prevails to this day) differed in form—it was either a republic or a monarchy. When the state was a monarchy, the rule of one person was recognised; when it was —a republic, the participation of the elected representatives of landowning society was in one degree or another recognised—this was in feudal society. Feudal society represented a division of classes under which the vast majority—the peasant serfs—were completely subjected to an insignificant minority—the owners of the land.

The development of trade, the development of commodity exchange, led to the emergence of a new class—the capitalists. Capital took shape at the close of the Middle Ages, when, after the discovery of America, world trade developed enormously, when the quantity of precious metals increased, when silver and gold became the medium of exchange, when money

circulation made it possible for individuals to possess tremendous wealth. Silver and gold were recognised as wealth all over the world. The economic power of the landowning class declined and the power of the new class—the representatives of capital—developed. The reconstruction of society was such that all citizens seemed to be equal, the old division into slave-owners and slaves disappeared, all were regarded as equal before the law irrespective of what capital each owned; whether he owned land as private property, or was a poor man who owned nothing but his labour-power—all were equal before the law. The law protects everybody equally; it protects the property of those who have it from attack by the masses who, possessing no property, possessing nothing but their labour-power, grow steadily impoverished and ruined and become converted into proletarians. Such is capitalist society.

I cannot dwell on it in detail. You will return to this when you come to discuss the Programme of the Party you will then hear a description of capitalist society. This society advanced against serfdom, against the old feudal system, under the slogan of liberty. But it was liberty for those who owned property. And when feudalism was shattered, which occurred at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century—in Russia it occurred later than in other countries, in 1861—the feudal state was then superseded by the capitalist state, which proclaims liberty for the whole people as its slogan, which declares that it expresses the will of the whole people and denies that it is a class state. And here there developed a struggle between the socialists, who are fighting for the liberty of the whole people, and the capitalist state—a struggle which has led to the creation of the Soviet Socialist Republic and which is spreading all over the world.

To understand the struggle that has been started against world capital, to understand the nature of the capitalist state, we must remember that when the capitalist state advanced against the feudal state it entered the fight under the slogan of liberty. The abolition of feudalism meant liberty for the representatives of the capitalist state and served their purpose, inasmuch as serfdom was breaking down and the peasants had acquired the opportunity of owning as their full property the land which they had purchased for compensation or in part by quit-rent—this did not concern the state: it protected property irrespective of its origin, because the state was founded on private property. The peasants became private owners in all the modern, civilised states. Even when the landowner surrendered part of his land to the peasant, the state protected private property, rewarding the landowner by compensation, by letting him take money for the land. The state as it were declared that it would fully preserve private property, and the state accorded it every support and protection. The state recognised the property rights of every merchant, industrialist and manufacturer. And this society, based on private property, on the power of capital, on the complete subjection of the propertyless workers and labouring masses of the peasantry, proclaimed that its rule was based on liberty. Combating feudalism, it proclaimed freedom of property and was particularly proud of the fact that the state had ceased, supposedly, to be a class state.

Yet the state continued to be a machine which helped the capitalists to hold the poor peasants and the working class in subjection. But in outward appearance it was free. It proclaimed universal suffrage, and declared through its champions, preachers, scholars and philosophers, that it was not a class state. Even now, when the Soviet Socialist Republics have

begun to fight the state, they accuse us of violating liberty, of building a state based on coercion, on the suppression of some by others, whereas they represent a popular, democratic state. And now, when the world socialist revolution has begun, and when the revolution has succeeded in some countries, when the fight against world capital has grown particularly acute, this question of the state has acquired the greatest importance and has become, one might say, the most burning one, the focus of all present-day political questions and political disputes.

Whichever party we take in Russia or in any of the more civilised countries, we find that nearly all political disputes, disagreements and opinions now centre around the conception of the state. Is the state in a capitalist country, in a democratic republic—especially one like Switzerland or the U.S.A.—in the freest democratic republics, an expression of the popular will, the sum total of the general decision of the people, the expression of the national will, and so forth; or is the state a machine that enables the capitalists of those countries to maintain their power over the working class and the peasantry? That is the fundamental question around which all political disputes all over the world now centre. What do they say about Bolshevism? The bourgeois press abuses the Bolsheviks. You will not find a single newspaper that does not repeat the hackneyed accusation that the Bolsheviks violate popular rule. If our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in their simplicity of heart (perhaps it is not simplicity, or perhaps it is the simplicity which the proverb says is worse than robbery) think that they discovered and invented the accusation that the Bolsheviks have violated liberty and popular rule, they are ludicrously mistaken. Today every one of the richest newspapers in the richest countries, which spend tens of

millions on their distribution and disseminate bourgeois lies and imperialist policy in tens of millions of copies—every one of these newspapers repeats these basic arguments and accusations against Bolshevism, namely, that the U.S.A., Britain and Switzerland are advanced states based on popular rule, whereas the Bolshevik republic is a state of bandits in which liberty is unknown, and that the Bolsheviks have violated the idea of popular rule and have even gone so far as to disperse the Constituent Assembly. These terrible accusations against the Bolsheviks are repeated all over the world. These accusations lead us directly to the question—what is the state? In order to understand these accusations, in order to study them and have a fully intelligent attitude towards them, and not to examine them on hearsay but with a firm opinion of our own, we must have a clear idea of what the state is. We have before us capitalist states of every kind and all the theories in defence of them which were created before the war. In order to answer the question properly we must critically examine all these theories and views.

I have already advised you to turn for help to Engels's book The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. This book says that every state in which private ownership of the land and means of production exists, in which capital dominates, however democratic it may be, is a capitalist state, a machine used by the capitalists to keep the working class and the poor peasants in subjection; .while universal suffrage, a Constituent Assembly, a parliament are merely a form, a sort of promissory note, which does not change the real state of affairs.

The forms of domination of the state may vary: capital manifests its power in one way where one form exists, and in

another way where another form exists—but essentially the power is in the hands of capital, whether there are voting qualifications or some other rights or not, or whether the republic is a democratic one or not—in fact, the more democratic it is the cruder and more cynical is the rule of capitalism. One of the most democratic republics in the world is the United States of America, yet nowhere (and those who have been there since 1905 probably know it) is the power of capital, the power of a handful of multimillionaires over the whole of society, so crude and so openly corrupt as in America. Once capital exists, it dominates the whole of society, and no democratic republic, no franchise can change its nature.

The democratic republic and universal suffrage were an immense progressive advance as compared with feudalism; they have enabled the proletariat to achieve its present unity and solidarity, to form those firm and disciplined ranks which are waging a systematic struggle against capital. There was nothing even approximately resembling this among the peasant serfs, not to speak of the slaves. The slaves, as we know, revolted, rioted, started civil wars, but they could never create a class-conscious majority and parties to lead the struggle, they could not clearly realise what their aims were, and even in the most revolutionary moments of history they were always pawns in the hands of the ruling classes. The bourgeois republic, parliament, universal suffrage—all represent great progress from the standpoint of the world development of society. Mankind moved towards capitalism, and it was capitalism alone which, thanks to urban culture, enabled the oppressed proletarian class to become conscious of itself and to create the world working-class movement, the millions of workers organised all over the world in parties—the socialist

parties which are consciously leading the struggle of the masses. Without parliamentarism, without an electoral system, this development of the working class would have been impossible. That is why all these things have acquired such great importance in the eyes of the broad masses of people. That is why a radical change seems to be so difficult. It is not only the conscious hypocrites, scientists and priests that uphold and defend the bourgeois lie that the state is free and that it is its mission to defend the interests of all; so also do a large number of people who sincerely adhere to the old prejudices and who cannot understand the transition from the old, capitalist society to socialism. Not only people who are directly dependent on the bourgeoisie, not only those who live under the yoke of capital or who have been bribed by capital (there are a large number of all sorts of scientists, artists, priests, etc. , in the service of capital), but even people who are simply under the sway of the prejudice of bourgeois liberty, have taken up arms against Bolshevism all over the world because when the Soviet Republic was founded it rejected these bourgeois lies and openly declared: you say your state is free, whereas in reality, as long as there is private property, your state, even if it is a democratic republic, is nothing but a machine used by the capitalists to suppress the workers, and the freer the state, the more clearly is this expressed. Examples of this are Switzerland in Europe and the United States in America. Nowhere does capital rule so cynically and ruthlessly, and nowhere is it so clearly apparent, as in these countries, although they are democratic republics, no matter how prettily they are painted and notwithstanding all the talk about labour democracy and the equality of all citizens. The fact is that in Switzerland and the United States capital dominates, and every attempt of the

workers to achieve the slightest real improvement in their condition is immediately met by civil war. There are fewer soldiers, a smaller standing army, in these countries—Switzerland has a militia and every Swiss has a gun at home, while in America there was no standing army until quite recently and so when there is a strike the bourgeoisie arms, hires soldiery and suppresses the strike; and nowhere is this suppression of the working-class movement accompanied by such ruthless severity as in Switzerland and the U.S.A. , and nowhere does the influence of capital in parliament manifest itself as powerfully as in these countries. The power of capital is everything, the stock exchange is everything, while parliament and elections are marionettes, puppets.... But the eyes of the workers are being opened more and more, and the idea of Soviet government is spreading farther and farther afield, especially after the bloody carnage we have just experienced. The necessity for a relentless war on the capitalists is becoming clearer and clearer to the working class.

Whatever guise a republic may assume, however democratic it may be, if it is a bourgeois republic, if it retains private ownership of the land and factories, and if private capital keeps the whole of society in wage-slavery, that is, if the republic does not carry out what is proclaimed in the Programme of our Party and in the Soviet Constitution, then this state is a machine for the suppression of some people by others. And we shall place this machine in the hands of the class that is to overthrow the power of capital. We shall reject all the old prejudices about the state meaning universal equality—for that is a fraud: as long as there is exploitation there cannot be equality. The landowner cannot be the equal of the worker, or the hungry man the equal of the full man. This machine called the state, before which

people bowed in superstitious awe, believing the old tales that it means popular rule, tales which the proletariat declares to be a bourgeois lie—this machine the proletariat will smash. So far we have deprived the capitalists of this machine and have taken it over. We shall use this machine, or bludgeon, to destroy all exploitation. And when the possibility of exploitation no longer exists anywhere in the world, when there are no longer owners of land and owners of factories, and when there is no longer a situation in which some gorge while others starve, only when the possibility of this no longer exists shall we consign this machine to the scrap-heap. Then there will be no state and no exploitation. Such is the view of our Communist Party. I hope that we shall return to this subject in subsequent lectures, return to it again and again.

V. I. Lenin

Material for the Second Congress of the Communist International

Lenin Collected Works, Volume 42, pages 199-203

1

Plan of a Resolution Concerning the Meaning of the Concept "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and the Fight Against the "Fashionable" Distortion of This Slogan

1. Precisely the revolutionary, and only the revolutionary part of the proletariat, to be organised into the party, and a similar part of the party promoted to its *leading* centres.

2. Systematic exposure to the masses of reformism and opportunism in the party and the labour movement.

3. Replacement of opportunist leaders in the party's sections, in the trade unions, in the co-operatives, in clubs, in cultural and educational and all other organisations of the proletariat by revolutionary leaders.

4. Formation of communist cells in all and every form of workers' and small-peasant organisations for systematic leadership of the entire labour movement (and part of the small-peasant movement) by the party.

=3?

5

. Obligatory appointment of definitely revolutionary workers who are entirely free from traditions, habits and prejudices of peaceful work, parliamentarism and legalism, and who, even if extremely inexperienced, are (1) capable of fighting reformism and opportunism (2) and are in close touch with the rank and file of the proletariat and with its most revolutionary section—

—their appointment to top posts in the party in sufficient numbers, especially in the Party's C.C. and the *parliamentary* group, and in all the most important (for the Party) bodies.

6. Especially detailed subordination of the parliamentary group to the Party's Central Committee and the latter's strict supervision over it.

7. The people who are to be considered collaborationists, advocates of a bloc between the

proletariat and the bourgeoisie and proprietors, are not only those who put this idea into practice directly, who stand for a bloc in the government, etc., but also those who put it into practice *indirectly*, for instance, those who stand for equality between the working class and the class of petty proprietors, for equality in their points of view, etc.

8. Press organs of the reformists (or conciliation with reformism) *L'Humanite*, should be closed down. The party should have 1 central organ of a definitely revolutionary trend-not like that of *Populaire* or *Freiheit*. The party's whole press is to be a single thought, a single trend, preparation for dictatorship.

9

Deeper into the masses. Not for the labour aristocracy, but for the untrained masses. Not only for the towns, but for the country. Agitation among the masses, not only propaganda (contra British Socialist Party).

Free distribution of leaflets for the backward workers covered by contributions from the advanced.

Proletarians to go to the masses, to assist strikers and farm labourers.

10

. Open analysis before the masses of mistakes and betrayals of the opportunist leaders (the strike of 20-21/V11. 1919, *etc.).*

Analysis in the press of *all* opportunist mistakes and weak speeches of parliamentarians, etc.

11. Systematic work on all occasions and in all respects in application to all spheres of life;

clarify *concrete* tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, viz.:

(a) suppression of the resistance of the exploiters (including the kulaks and saboteurs among the intellectuals);

(b) confiscation, since redemption payment now, after 1914-18, is impossible;

(c) special supervision over the exploiters and bourgeois intellectuals;

(d) immediate revolutionary improvement of life
for the workers
for all the exploited masses

for the small farmers
at the expense of the exploiters;

(e) neutralisation of the small proprietors the

the middle peasants

artisans

small manufacturers

part of the bourgeois intelligentsia i. e., with a view to preventing them going over to the Whites;

(f) determination, capability, skill, special organisation for suppressing resistance.

1. ΣΣ=(α) break down (β) enthuse (γ) neutralise,

12. Epuration…

13

. "Freedom of the press"?—"assembly"?—"the person'?

Party = the vanguard
(αα) (1) revolutionary part

(ββ) (2) linked with the *masses.*

Immediate preparation (2. 3. 4. 5. 6 (+13). 7. αα

(8. 9. 10.ββ

Chief danger: Rights, i.e., undisplaced leaders.

3 parties (+ American Socialist Party[8]) (+ Swiss Socialist Party[9]). Immediate affiliation *impossible.*

Lefts. Their mistakes. Immediate affiliation possible.

Reformism in the Italian Party (maybe, + B.S.P.?)

NB //

Committee on the French Party and press:

Lozovsky Serrati +

Bukharin Deslinières +

Guilbeaux + Sadol

Written in July, not later than 4, 1920

V. I. Lenin

Letter to Sylvia Pankhurst

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To Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, London

August 28, 1919

Dear Comrade,

I received your letter of July 16, 1919, only yesterday. I am extremely grateful to you for the information about Britain and will try to fulfil your request, i.e., reply to your question.

I have no doubt at all that many workers who are among the best, most honest and sincerely revolutionary members of the proletariat are enemies of parliamentarism and of any participation in Parliament. The older capitalist culture and bourgeois democracy in any country, the more understandable this is, since the bourgeoisie in old parliamentary countries has excellently mastered the art of hypocrisy and of fooling the people in a thousand ways, passing off bourgeois parliamentarism as "democracy in general" or as "pure democracy" and so on, cunningly concealing the million threads which bind Parliament to the stock exchange and the capitalists, utilising a venal mercenary press and exercising the power of money, the power of capital in every way.

There is no doubt that the Communist International and the Communist Parties of the various countries would be making an irreparable mistake if they repulsed those workers who stand for Soviet power, but who are against participation in the parliamentary struggle. If we take the problem in its general

form, theoretically, then it is this very programme, i.e., the struggle for Soviet power, for the Soviet republic, which is able to unite, and today must certainly unite, all sincere, honest revolutionaries from among the workers. Very many anarchist workers are now becoming sincere supporters of Soviet power, and that being so, it proves them to be our best comrades and friends, the best of revolutionaries, who have been enemies of Marxism only through misunderstanding, or, more correctly, not through misunderstanding but because the official socialism prevailing in the epoch of the Second International (1889-1914) betrayed Marxism, lapsed into opportunism, perverted Marx's revolutionary teachings in general and his teachings on the lessons of the Paris Commune of 1871 in particular. I have written in detail about this in my book The State and Revolution and will therefore not dwell further on the problem.

What if in a certain country those who are Communists by their convictions and their readiness to carry on revolutionary work, sincere partisans of Soviet power (the "Soviet system", as non-Russians sometimes call it), cannot unite owing to disagreement over participation in Parliament?

I should consider such disagreement immaterial at present, since the struggle for Soviet power is the political struggle of the proletariat in its highest, most class-conscious, most revolutionary form. It is better to be with the revolutionary workers when they are mistaken over some partial or secondary question than with the "official" socialists or Social-Democrats, if the latter are not sincere, firm revolutionaries, and are unwilling or unable to conduct revolutionary work among the working masses, but pursue correct tactics in regard to that

partial question. And the question of parliamentarism is now a partial, secondary question. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were, in my opinion, correct when they defended participation in the elections to the German bourgeois parliament, to the constituent National Assembly, at the January 1919 Conference of the Spartacists in Berlin, against the majority at the Conference.[2] But, of course, they were still more correct when they preferred remaining with the Communist Party, which was making a partial mistake, to siding with the direct traitors to socialism, like Scheidemann and his party, or with those servile souls, doctrinaires, cowards, spineless accomplices of the bourgeoisie, and reformists in practice, such as Kautsky, Haase, Däumig and all this "party" of German "Independents".

I am personally convinced that to renounce participation in the parliamentary elections is a mistake on the part of the revolutionary workers of Britain, but better to make that mistake than to delay the formation of a big workers' Communist Party in Britain out of all the trends and elements, listed by you, which sympathise with Bolshevism and sincerely support the Soviet Republic. If, for example, among the B.S.P. there were sincere Bolsheviks who refused, because of differences over participation in Parliament, to merge at once in a Communist Party with trends 4, 6 and 7, then these Bolsheviks, in my opinion, would be making a mistake a thousand times greater than the mistaken refusal to participate in elections to the British bourgeois parliament. In saying this I naturally assume that trends 4, 6 and 7, taken together, are really connected with the mass of the workers, and are not merely small intellectual groups, as is often the case in Britain. In this respect particular importance probably attaches to the

Workers Committees and Shop Stewards, [These words are in English in the original.—Editor] which, one should imagine, are closely connected with the masses.

Unbreakable ties with the mass of the workers, the ability to agitate unceasingly among them, to participate in every strike, to respond to every demand of the masses—this is the chief thing for a Communist Party, especially in such a country as Britain, where until now (as incidentally is the case in all imperialist countries) participation in the socialist movement, and the labour movement generally, has been confined chiefly to a thin top crust of workers, the labour aristocracy, most of whom are thoroughly and hopelessly spoiled by reformism and are held back by bourgeois and imperialist prejudices. Without a struggle against this stratum, without the destruction of every trace of its prestige among the workers, without convincing the masses of the utter bourgeois corruption of this stratum, there can be no question of a serious communist workers' movement. This applies to Britain, France, America and Germany.

Those working-class revolutionaries who make parliamentarism the centre of their attacks are quite right inasmuch as these attacks serve to express their denial in principle of bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy. Soviet power, the Soviet republic—this is what the workers' revolution has put in place of bourgeois democracy, this is the form of transition from capitalism to socialism, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And criticism of parliamentarism is not only legitimate and necessary, as giving the case for the transition to Soviet power, but is quite correct, as being the recognition of the historically conditional and limited character of parliamentarism, its connection with

capitalism and capitalism alone, of its progressive character as compared with the Middle Ages, and of its reactionary character as compared with Soviet power.

But the critics of parliamentarism in Europe and America, when they are anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists, are very often wrong insofar as they reject all participation in elections and parliamentary activity. Here they simply show their lack of revolutionary experience. We Russians, who have lived through two great revolutions in the twentieth century, are well aware what importance parliamentarism can have, and actually does have during a revolutionary period in general and in the very midst of a revolution in particular. Bourgeois parliaments must be abolished and replaced by Soviet bodies. There is no doubt about that. There is no doubt now, after the experience of Russia, Hungary, Germany and other countries, that this absolutely must take place during a proletarian revolution. Therefore, systematically to prepare the working masses for this, to explain to them in advance the importance of Soviet power, to conduct propaganda and agitation for it—all this is the absolute duty of the worker who wants to be a revolutionary in deeds. But we Russians fulfilled that task, operating in the parliamentary arena, too. In the tsarist, fake, landowners' Duma our representatives knew how to carry on revolutionary and republican propaganda. In just the same way Soviet propaganda can and must be carried on in and from within bourgeois parliaments.

Perhaps that will not be easy to achieve at once in this or that parliamentary country. But that is another question. Steps must be taken to ensure that these correct tactics are mastered by the revolutionary workers in all countries. And if the workers'

party is really revolutionary, if it is really a workers' party (that is, connected with the masses, with the majority of the working people, with the rank and file of the proletariat and not merely with its top crust), if it is really a party, i.e., a firmly, effectively knit organisation of the revolutionary vanguard, which knows how to carry on revolutionary work among the masses by all possible means, then such a party will surely be able to keep its own parliamentarians in hand, to make of them real revolutionary propagandists, such as Karl Liebknecht was, and not opportunists, not those who corrupt the proletariat with bourgeois methods, bourgeois customs, bourgeois ideas or bourgeois poverty of ideas.

If that failed to be achieved in Britain at once, if, in addition, no union of the supporters of Soviet power proved possible in Britain because of a difference over parliamentarism and only because of that, then I should consider a good step forward to complete unity the immediate formation of two Communist Parties, i.e., two parties which stand for the transition from bourgeois parliamentarism to Soviet power. Let one of these parties recognise participation in the bourgeois parliament, and the other reject it; this disagreement is now so immaterial that the most reasonable thing would be not to split over it. But even the joint existence of two such parties would be immense progress as compared with the present situation, would most likely be a transition to complete unity and the speedy victory of communism.

Soviet power in Russia has not only shown by the experience of almost two years that the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible even in a peasant country and is capable, by creating a strong army (the best proof that organisation and order

prevail), of holding out in unbelievably, exceptionally difficult conditions.

Soviet power has done more: it has already achieved a moral victory throughout the world, for the working masses everywhere, although they get only tiny fragments of the truth about Soviet power, although they hear thousands and millions of false reports about Soviet power, are already in favour of Soviet power. It is already understood by the proletariat of the whole world that this power is the power of the working people, that it alone is salvation from capitalism, from the yoke of capital, from wars between the imperialists, that it leads to lasting peace.

That is why defeats of individual Soviet republics by the imperialists are possible, but it is impossible to conquer the world Soviet movement of the proletariat.

With communist greetings,

N. Lenin

P.S.—The following cutting from the Russian press will give you an example of our information about Britain:

"London, 25.8 (via Beloostrov). The London correspondent of the Copenhagen paper Berlingske Tidende wires on August 3rd concerning the Bolshevik movement in Britain: "The strikes which have occurred in the last few days and the recent revelations have shaken the confidence of the British in the immunity of their country to Bolshevism. At present the press is vigorously discussing this question, and the government is making every effort to establish that a "conspiracy" has existed for quite a long time and has had for its aim neither more nor

less than the overthrow of the existing system. The British police have arrested a revolutionary bureau which, according to the press had both money and arms at its disposal. The Times publishes the contents of certain documents found on the arrested men. They contain a complete revolutionary programme, according to which the entire bourgeoisie are to be disarmed; arms and ammunition are to be obtained for Soviets of Workers' and Red Army Deputies and a Red Army formed; all government posts are to be filled by workers. Furthermore, it was planned to set up a revolutionary tribunal for political criminals and persons guilty of cruelly treating prisoners. All foodstuffs were to be confiscated. Parliament and other organs of public government were to be dissolved and revolutionary Soviets created in their place. The working day was to be lowered to six hours and the minimum weekly wage raised to £7. All state and other debts were to be annulled. All banks, industrial and commercial enterprises and means of transport were to be declared nationalised."

If this is true, then I must offer the British imperialists and capitalists, in the shape of their organ, the richest newspaper in the world, The Times, my respectful gratitude and thanks for their excellent propaganda in behalf of Bolshevism. Carry on in the same spirit, gentlemen of The Times, you are splendidly leading Britain to the victory of Bolshevism!

Lenin

"Left-Wing" Communism: an Infantile Disorder

April May 1920

Should We Participate in Bourgeois Parliaments?

It is with the utmost contempt—and the utmost levity—that the German "Left" Communists reply to this question in the negative. Their arguments? In the passage quoted above we read:

". . . All reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, must be emphatically rejected. . . ."

This is said with ridiculous pretentiousness and is patently wrong. "Reversion" to parliamentarianism, forsooth! Perhaps there is already a Soviet republic in Germany? It does not look like it! How, then, can one speak of "reversion"? Is this not an empty phrase?

Parliamentarianism has become "historically obsolete". That is true in the propaganda sense. However, everybody knows that this is still a far cry from overcoming it in practice. Capitalism could have been declared—and with full justice—to be "historically obsolete" many decades ago, but that does not at all remove the need for a very long and very persistent struggle on the basis of capitalism. Parliamentarianism is "historically obsolete" from the standpoint of world history, i.e., the era of bourgeois parliamentarianism is over, and the era of the proletarian dictatorship has begun. That is incontestable. But world history is counted in decades. Ten or twenty years earlier

or later makes no difference when measured with the yardstick of world history; from the standpoint of world history it is a trifle that cannot be considered even approximately. But for that very reason, it is a glaring theoretical error to apply the yardstick of world history to practical politics.

Is parliamentarianism "politically obsolete"? That is quite a different matter. If that were true, the position of the "Lefts" would be a strong one. But it has to be proved by a most searching analysis, and the "Lefts" do not even know how to approach the matter. In the "Theses on Parliamentarianism", published in the Bulletin of the Provisional Bureau in Amsterdam of the Communist International No. 1, February 1920, and obviously expressing the Dutch-Left or Left-Dutch strivings, the analysis, as we shall see, is also hopelessly poor.

In the first place, contrary to the opinion of such outstanding political leaders as Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, the German "Lefts", as we know, considered parliamentarianism "politically obsolete" even in January 1919. We know that the "Lefts" were mistaken. This fact alone utterly destroys, at a single stroke, the proposition that parliamentarianism is "politically obsolete". It is for the "Lefts" to prove why their error, indisputable at that time, is no longer an error. They do not and cannot produce even a shred of proof. A political party's attitude towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfils in practice its obligations towards its class and the working people. Frankly acknowledging a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions that have led up to it, and thrashing out the means of its rectification—that is the hallmark of a serious party; that is how

it should perform its duties, and how it should educate and train its class, and then the masses. By failing to fulfil this duty and give the utmost attention and consideration to the study of their patent error, the "Lefts" in Germany (and in Holland) have proved that they are not a party of a class, but a circle, not a party of the masses, but a group of intellectualists and of a few workers who ape the worst features of intellectualism.

Second, in the same pamphlet of the Frankfurt group of "Lefts", which we have already cited in detail, we read:

". . . The millions of workers who still follow the policy of the Centre [the Catholic 'Centre' Party] are counter-revolutionary. The rural proletarians provide the legions of counter-revolutionary troops." (Page 3 of the pamphlet.)

Everything goes to show that this statement is far too sweeping and exaggerated. But the basic fact set forth here is incontrovertible, and its acknowledgment by the "Lefts" is particularly clear evidence of their mistake. How can one say that "parliamentarianism is politically obsolete", when "millions" and "legions" of proletarians are not only still in favour of parliamentarianism in general, but are downright "counter-revolutionary"!? It is obvious that parliamentarianism in Germany is not yet politically obsolete. It is obvious that the "Lefts" in Germany have mistaken their desire, their politico-ideological attitude, for objective reality. That is a most dangerous mistake for revolutionaries to make. In Russia—where, over a particularly long period and in particularly varied forms, the most brutal and savage yoke of tsarism produced revolutionaries of diverse shades, revolutionaries who displayed amazing devotion, enthusiasm, heroism and will power—in Russia we have observed this mistake of the

revolutionaries at very close quarters; we have studied it very attentively and have a first-hand knowledge of it; that is why we can also see it especially clearly in others. Parliamentarianism is of course "politically obsolete" to the Communists in Germany; but—and that is the whole point—we must not regard what is obsolete to us as something obsolete to a class, to the masses. Here again we find that the "Lefts" do not know how to reason, do not know how to act as the party of a class, as the party of the masses. You must not sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. That is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. You are in duty bound to call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices what they are—prejudices. But at the same time you must soberly follow the actual state of the class-consciousness and preparedness of the entire class (not only of its communist vanguard), and of all the working people (not only of their advanced elements).

Even if only a fairly large minority of the industrial workers, and not "millions" and "legions", follow the lead of the Catholic clergy—and a similar minority of rural workers follow the landowners and kulaks (Grossbauern)—it undoubtedly signifies that parliamentarianism in Germany has not yet politically outlived itself, that participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is obligatory on the party of the revolutionary proletariat specifically for the purpose of educating the backward strata of its own class, and for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden and ignorant rural masses. Whilst you lack the strength to do away with bourgeois parliaments and every other type of reactionary institution, you must work within them because it is there that

you will still find workers who are duped by the priests and stultified by the conditions of rural life; otherwise you risk turning into nothing but windbags.

Third, the "Left" Communists have a great deal to say in praise of us Bolsheviks. One sometimes feels like telling them to praise us less and to try to get a better knowledge of the Bolsheviks' tactics. We took part in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the Russian bourgeois parliament in September–November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? If not, then this should be clearly stated and proved, for it is necessary in evolving the correct tactics for international communism. If they were correct, then certain conclusions must be drawn. Of course, there can be no question of placing conditions in Russia on a par with conditions in Western Europe. But as regards the particular question of the meaning of the concept that "parliamentarianism has become politically obsolete", due account should be taken of our experience, for unless concrete experience is taken into account such concepts very easily turn into empty phrases. In September–November 1917, did we, the Russian Bolsheviks, not have more right than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarianism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we did, for the point is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long time or a short time, but how far the masses of the working people are prepared (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to dissolve the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dissolved). It is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact that, in September–November 1917, the urban working class and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were, because of a number of special conditions, exceptionally well prepared to accept the

Soviet system and to disband the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did not boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before and after the proletariat conquered political power. That these elections yielded exceedingly valuable (and to the proletariat, highly useful) political results has, I make bold to hope, been proved by me in the above-mentioned article, which analyses in detail the returns of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia.

The conclusion which follows from this is absolutely incontrovertible: it has been proved that, far from causing harm to the revolutionary proletariat, participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament, even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet republic and even after such a victory, actually helps that proletariat to prove to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be done away with; it facilitates their successful dissolution, and helps to make bourgeois parliamentarianism "politically obsolete". To ignore this experience, while at the same time claiming affiliation to the Communist International, which must work out its tactics internationally (not as narrow or exclusively national tactics, but as international tactics), means committing a gross error and actually abandoning internationalism in deed, while recognising it in word.

Now let us examine the "Dutch-Left" arguments in favour of non-participation in parliaments. The following is the text of Thesis No. 4, the most important of the above-mentioned "Dutch" theses:

"When the capitalist system of production has broken down, and society is in a state of revolution, parliamentary action

gradually loses importance as compared with the action of the masses themselves. When, in these conditions, parliament becomes the centre and organ of the counter-revolution, whilst, on the other hand, the labouring class builds up the instruments of its power in the Soviets, it may even prove necessary to abstain from all and any participation in parliamentary action."

The first sentence is obviously wrong, since action by the masses, a big strike, for instance, is more important than parliamentary activity at all times, and not only during a revolution or in a revolutionary situation. This obviously untenable and historically and politically incorrect argument merely shows very clearly that the authors completely ignore both the general European experience (the French experience before the revolutions of 1848 and 1870; the German experience of 1878–90, etc.) and the Russian experience (see above) of the importance of combining legal and illegal struggle. This question is of immense importance both in general and in particular, because in all civilised and advanced countries the time is rapidly approaching when such a combination will more and more become—and has already partly become—mandatory on the party of the revolutionary proletariat, inasmuch as civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is maturing and is imminent, and because of savage persecution of the Communists by republican governments and bourgeois governments generally, which resort to any violation of legality (the example of America is edifying enough), etc. The Dutch, and the Lefts in general, have utterly failed to understand this highly important question.

The second sentence is, in the first place, historically wrong. We Bolsheviks participated in the most counterrevolutionary

parliaments, and experience has shown that this participation was not only useful but indispensable to the party of the revolutionary proletariat, after the first bourgeois revolution in Russia (1905), so as to pave the way for the second bourgeois revolution (February 1917), and then for the socialist revolution (October 1917). In the second place, this sentence is amazingly illogical. If a parliament becomes an organ and a "centre" (in reality it never has been and never can be a "centre", but that is by the way) of counter-revolution, while the workers are building up the instruments of their power in the form of the Soviets, then it follows that the workers must prepare—ideologically, politically and technically—for the struggle of the Soviets against parliament, for the dispersal of parliament by the Soviets. But it does not at all follow that this dispersal is hindered, or is not facilitated, by the presence of a Soviet opposition within the counter-revolutionary parliament. In the course of our victorious struggle against Denikin and Kolchak, we never found that the existence of a Soviet and proletarian opposition in their camp was immaterial to our victories. We know perfectly well that the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918 was not hampered but was actually facilitated by the fact that, within the counter-revolutionary Constituent Assembly which was about to be dispersed, there was a consistent Bolshevik, as well as an inconsistent, Left Socialist-Revolutionary Soviet opposition. The authors of the theses are engaged in muddled thinking; they have forgotten the experience of many, if not all, revolutions, which shows the great usefulness, during a revolution, of a combination of mass action outside a reactionary parliament with an opposition sympathetic to (or, better still, directly supporting) the revolution within it. The

Dutch, and the "Lefts" in general, argue in this respect like doctrinaires of the revolution, who have never taken part in a real revolution, have never given thought to the history of revolutions, or have naïvely mistaken subjective "rejection" of a reactionary institution for its actual destruction by the combined operation of a number of objective factors. The surest way of discrediting and damaging a new political (and not only political) idea is to reduce it to absurdity on the plea of defending it. For any truth, if "overdone" (as Dietzgen Senior put it), if exaggerated, or if carried beyond the limits of its actual applicability, can be reduced to an absurdity, and is even bound to become an absurdity under these conditions. That is just the kind of disservice the Dutch and German Lefts are rendering to the new truth of the Soviet form of government being superior to bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Of course, anyone would be in error who voiced the outmoded viewpoint or in general considered it impermissible, in all and any circumstances, to reject participation in bourgeois parliaments. I cannot attempt here to formulate the conditions under which a boycott is useful, since the object of this pamphlet is far more modest, namely, to study Russian experience in connection with certain topical questions of international communist tactics. Russian experience has provided us with one successful and correct instance (1905), and another that was incorrect (1906), of the use of a boycott by the Bolsheviks. Analysing the first case, we, see that we succeeded in preventing a reactionary government from convening a reactionary parliament in a situation in which extra-parliamentary revolutionary mass action (strikes in particular) was developing at great speed, when not a single section of the proletariat and the peasantry could support the reactionary government in any way, and when the

revolutionary proletariat was gaining influence over the backward masses through the strike struggle and through the agrarian movement. It is quite obvious that this experience is not applicable to present-day European conditions. It is likewise quite obvious—and the foregoing arguments bear this out—that the advocacy, even if with reservations, by the Dutch and the other "Lefts" of refusal to participate in parliaments is fundamentally wrong and detrimental to the cause of the revolutionary proletariat.

In Western Europe and America, parliament has become most odious to the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. That cannot be denied. It can readily be understood, for it is difficult to imagine anything more infamous, vile or treacherous than the behaviour of the vast majority of socialist and Social-Democratic parliamentary deputies during and after the war. It would, however, be not only unreasonable but actually criminal to yield to this mood when deciding how this generally recognised evil should be fought. In many countries of Western Europe, the revolutionary mood, we might say, is at present a "novelty", or a "rarity", which has all too long been vainly and impatiently awaited; perhaps that is why people so easily yield to that mood. Certainly, without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions facilitating the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics will never develop into action. In Russia, however, lengthy, painful and sanguinary experience has taught us the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built on a revolutionary mood alone. Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of all the class forces in a particular state (and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over) as well as of the experience of revolutionary movements. It is very easy to show one's

"revolutionary" temper merely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, or merely by repudiating participation in parliaments; its very ease, however, cannot turn this into a solution of a difficult, a very difficult, problem. It is far more difficult to create a really revolutionary parliamentary group in a European parliament than it was in Russia. That stands to reason. But it is only a particular expression of the general truth that it was easy for Russia, in the specific and historically unique situation of 1917, to start the socialist revolution, but it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to continue the revolution and bring it to its consummation. I had occasion to point this out already at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view. Certain specific conditions, viz., (1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending, as a consequence of this revolution, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree; (2) the possibility of taking temporary advantage of the mortal conflict between the world's two most powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; (3) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to adopt the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of whose members were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realise them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat—all these specific conditions do not at present exist in Western Europe, and a repetition of

such or similar conditions will not occur so easily. Incidentally, apart from a number of other causes, that is why it is more difficult for Western Europe to start a socialist revolution than it was for us. To attempt to "circumvent" this difficulty by "skipping" the arduous job of utilising reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes is absolutely childish. You want to create a new society, yet you fear the difficulties involved in forming a good parliamentary group made up of convinced, devoted and heroic Communists, in a reactionary parliament! Is that not childish? If Karl Liebknecht in Germany and Z. Höglund in Sweden were able, even without mass support from below, to set examples of the truly revolutionary utilisation of reactionary parliaments, why should a rapidly growing revolutionary mass party, in the midst of the post-war disillusionment and embitterment of the masses, be unable to forge a communist group in the worst of parliaments? It is because, in Western Europe, the backward masses of the workers and—to an even greater degree—of the small peasants are much more imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they were in Russia because of that, it is only from within such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can (and must) wage a long and persistent struggle, undaunted by any difficulties, to expose, dispel and overcome these prejudices.

The German "Lefts" complain of bad "leaders" in their party, give way to despair, and even arrive at a ridiculous "negation" of "leaders". But in conditions in which it is often necessary to hide "leaders" underground, the evolution of good "leaders", reliable, tested and authoritative, is a very difficult matter; these difficulties cannot be successfully overcome without combining legal and illegal work, and without testing the "leaders",

among other ways, in parliaments. Criticism—the most keen, ruthless and uncompromising criticism—should be directed, not against parliamentarianism or parliamentary activities, but against those leaders who are unable—and still more against those who are unwilling—to utilise parliamentary elections and the parliamentary rostrum in a revolutionary and communist manner. Only such criticism—combined, of course, with the dismissal of incapable leaders and their replacement by capable ones—will constitute useful and fruitful revolutionary work that will simultaneously train the "leaders" to be worthy of the working class and of all working people, and train the masses to be able properly to understand the political situation and the often very complicated and intricate tasks that spring from that situation.

The Second Congress Of The Communist International

August 2, 1920

Speech On Parliamentarianism

Comrade Bordige seems to have wanted to defend the Italian Marxists' point of view here, yet he has failed to reply to any of the arguments advanced by other Marxists in favour of parliamentary action.

Comrade Bordiga has admitted that historical experience is not created artificially. He has just told us that the struggle must be carried into another sphere. Is he not aware that every revolutionary crisis has been attended by a parliamentary crisis? True, he has said that the struggle must be carried into another sphere, into the Soviets. Bordiga, however, has himself admitted that Soviets cannot be created artificially. The example of Russia shows that Soviets can be organised either during a revolution or on the eve of a revolution. Even in the Kerensky period, the Soviets (which were Menshevik Soviets) were organised in such a way that they could not possibly constitute a proletarian government. Parliament is a product of historical development, and we cannot eliminate it until we are strong enough to disperse the bourgeois parliament. It is only as a member of the bourgeois parliament that one can, in the given historical conditions, wage a struggle against bourgeois society and parliamentarianism. The same weapon as the bourgeoisie employs in the struggle must also be used by the proletariat, of course, with entirely different aims. You cannot assert that that is not the case, and if you want to challenge it, you will have thereby to erase the experience of all revolutionary developments in the world.

You have said that the trade unions are also opportunist, that they, too, constitute a danger. On the other hand, however, you have said that an exception must be made in the case of trade unions, because they are workers' organisations. But that is true only up to a certain point. There are very backward elements in the trade unions too: a section of the proletarianised petty bourgeoisie, the backward workers, and the small peasants. All these elements really think that their interests are represented in parliament. This idea must be combated by work within parliament and by citing the facts, so as to show the masses the truth. Theory will have no effect on the backward masses; they need practical experience.

This was to be seen in the case of Russia too. We were obliged to convene the Constituent Assembly even after the victory of the proletariat, so as to prove to the backward proletarians that they had nothing to gain from that Assembly. To bring home the difference between the two, we had to concretely contrapose the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly and to show the Soviets as the only solution.

Comrade Souchy, a revolutionary syndicalist, advocated the same theory, but he had no logic on his side. He said that he was not a Marxist, so everything can be readily understood. But you, Comrade Bordiga, assert that you are a Marxist, so we must expect more logic from you. You must know how parliament can be smashed. If you can do it by an armed uprising in all countries, well and good. You are aware that we in Russia proved our determination to destroy the bourgeois parliament, not only in theory, but in practice as well. You, however, have lost sight of the fact that this is impossible without fairly long preparations, and that in most countries it is

as yet impossible to destroy parliament at one stroke. We are obliged to carry on a struggle within parliament for the destruction of parliament. For the conditions determining the political line of all classes in modern society you substitute your revolutionary determination; that is why you forget that to destroy the bourgeois parliament in Russia we were first obliged to convene the Constituent Assembly, even after our victory. You say: "It is a fact that the Russian revolution is a case that is not in accord with conditions in Western Europe", but you have not produced a single weighty argument to prove that to us. We went through a period of bourgeois democracy. We went through it rapidly at a time when we had to agitate for elections to the Constituent Assembly. Later, when the working class was able to seize power, the peasants still believed in the necessity of a bourgeois parliament.

Taking account of these backward elements, we had to proclaim the elections and show the masses, by example and by facts, that the Constituent Assembly, which was elected at a time of dire and universal need, did not express the aspirations and demands of the exploited classes. In this way the conflict between Soviet and bourgeois government became quite clear, not only to us, the vanguard of the working class, but also to the vast majority of the peasantry, to the petty office employees, the petty bourgeoisie, etc. In all capitalist countries there are backward elements in the working class who are convinced that parliament is the true representative of the people and do not see the unscrupulous methods employed there. You say that parliament is an instrument with the aid of which the bourgeoisie deceive the masses. But this argument should be turned against you, and it does turn against your theses. How will you reveal the true character of parliament to the really

backward masses, who are deceived by the bourgeoisie? How will you expose the various parliamentary manoeuvres, or the positions of the various parties, if you are not in parliament, if you remain outside parliament? If you are Marxists, you must admit that, in capitalist society, there is a close link between the relations of classes and the relations of parties. How, I repeat, will you show all this if you are not members of parliament, and if you renounce parliamentary action? The history of the Russian revolution has clearly shown that the masses of the working class, the peasantry, and petty office employees could not have been convinced by any arguments, unless their own experience had convinced them.

It has been claimed here that it is a waste of time to participate in the parliamentary struggle. Can one conceive of any other institution in which all classes are as interested as they are in parliament? This cannot be created artificially. If all classes are drawn into the parliamentary struggle, it is because the class interests and conaicts are reflected in parliament. If it were possible everywhere and immediately to bring about, let us say, a decisive general strike so as to overthrow capitalism at a single stroke, the revolution would have already taken place in a number of countries. But we must reckon with the facts, and parliament is a scene of the class struggle. Comrade Bordiga and those who share his views must tell the masses the truth. Germany provides the best example that a Communist group in parliament is possible. That is why you should have frankly said to the masses: "We are too weak to create a party with a strong organisation." That would be the truth that ought to be told. But if you confessed your weakness to the masses, they would become your opponents, not your supporters; they would become supporters of parliamentarianism.

If you say: “Fellow workers, we are so weak that we cannot form a party disciplined enough to compel its members of parliament to submit to it”, the workers would abandon you, for they would ask themselves: “How can we set up a dictatorship of the proletariat with such weaklings?”

You are very naïve if you think that the intelligentsia, the middle class, and the petty bourgeoisie will turn Communist the day the proletariat is victorious.

If you do not harbour this illusion, you should begin right away to prepare the proletariat to pursue its own line. You will find no exceptions to this rule in any branch of state affairs. On the day following the revolution, you will everywhere find advocates of opportunism who call themselves-Communists, i.e., petty bourgeois who refuse to recognise the discipline of the Communist Party or of the proletarian state. Unless you prepare the workers for the creation of a really disciplined party, which will compel its members to submit to its discipline, you will never prepare for the dictatorship of the proletariat. I think that this accounts for your unwillingness to admit that the repudiation of parliamentary action by a great many of the new Communist parties stems from their weakness. I am convinced that the vast majority of the really revolutionary workers will follow us and speak up against your anti-parliamentary

INCORRECT CONCLUSIONS FROM CORRECT PREMISES

Lenin

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM, AN INFANTILE DISORDER
1920

But Comrade Bordiga and his "Left" friends draw from their correct criticism of Messrs. Turati and Co. the wrong conclusion that participation in parliament is harmful in general. The Italian "Lefts" cannot advance even a shadow of serious argument in support of this view. They simply do not know (or try to forget) the international examples of really revolutionary and communist utilization of bourgeois parliament which has been of unquestionable value in preparing for the proletarian revolution. They simply cannot conceive of a "new" way of utilizing parliament, and keep shouting and endlessly repeating themselves about the "old," non Bolshevik way.

This is precisely where their fundamental mistake lies. Not only in the parliamentary field, but in all fields of activity Communism must introduce (and without long, persistent and stubborn effort it will be unable to introduce) something new in principle that will represent a radical break with the traditions of the Second International (while retaining and developing what was good in the latter).

Let us take, say, journalistic work. Newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets perform a necessary work of propaganda, agitation and organization. Not a single mass movement in any at all civilized country can dispense with a journalistic apparatus. No outcries against "leaders," no solemn vows to preserve the purity of the masses from the influence of leaders will obviate the necessity

of utilizing for this work people who come from a bourgeois intellectual environment or will get rid of the bourgeois-democratic, "private property" atmosphere and environment in which this work is performed under capitalism. Even two and a half years after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, after the conquest of political power by the proletariat, we still have this atmosphere around us, this mass (peasant, artisan) environment of bourgeois-democratic private-property relations.

Parliamentarism is one form of activity, journalism is another. The content of both can be communist, and it should be communist if those engaged in both spheres are real Communists, are real members of a proletarian mass party. Yet, in neither sphere -- nor in any other sphere of activity under capitalism and during the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism -- is it possible to avoid those difficulties which the proletariat must overcome, those special problems which the proletariat must solve in order to utilize for its own purposes the services of those who have come from the ranks of the bourgeoisie, in order to gain the victory over bourgeois intellectual prejudices and influences, in order to weaken the resistance of (and, ultimately, completely to transform) the petty-bourgeois environment.

Did we not, before the war of 1914-18, witness in all countries an extraordinary abundance of instances of extreme "Left" anarchists, syndicalists and others fulminating against parliamentarism, deriding bourgeois-vulgarized parliamentary Socialists, castigating their careerism, and so on and so forth, and yet themselves making the same kind of bourgeois career through journalism and through work in the syndicates (trade

unions)? Are not the examples of Messrs. Jouhaux and Merrheim, to limit oneself to France, typical?

The childishness of those who "repudiate" participation in parliament consists precisely in the fact that they think it possible to "solve " the difficult problem of combating bourgeois-democratic influences within the working-class movement by such a "simple," "easy," supposedly revolutionary method, when in reality they are only running away from their own shadow, only closing their eyes to difficulties and only trying to brush them aside with mere words. The most shameless careerism, bourgeois utilization of parliamentary seats, glaring reformist perversion of parliamentary activity, vulgar, petty-bourgeois routine are all unquestionably common and prevalent characteristic features that are engendered by capitalism everywhere, not only outside but also inside the working-class movement. But then capitalism, and the bourgeois environment it creates (which disappears very slowly even after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for the peasantry constantly regenerates the bourgeoisie), give rise to what is also essentially bourgeois careerism, national chauvinism, petty-bourgeois vulgarity, etc., only varying insignificantly in form -- in positively every sphere of activity and life.

You think, my dear boycottists and anti-parliamentarians, that you are "terribly revolutionary," but in reality you are frightened by the comparatively small difficulties of the struggle against bourgeois influences within the working-class movement, whereas your victory -- i.e., the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the conquest of political power by the proletariat -- will create these very same difficulties on a still

larger, an infinitely larger scale. Like children, you are frightened by a small difficulty which confronts you today, not understanding that tomorrow and the day after you will have to learn just the same, and learn thoroughly, to overcome the same difficulties, only on an immeasurably greater scale.

Under Soviet rule, your proletarian party and ours will be invaded by a still larger number of bourgeois intellectuals. They will worm their way into the Soviets, the courts, and the administration, for Communism cannot be built otherwise than with the aid of the human material created by capitalism, and the bourgeois intellectuals cannot be expelled and destroyed, but must be vanquished, remoulded, assimilated and re-educated, just as we must -- in a protracted struggle waged on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat -- re-educate the proletarians themselves, who do not abandon their petty-bourgeois prejudices at one stroke, by a miracle, at the behest of the Virgin Mary, at the behest of a slogan, resolution or decree, but only in the course of a long and difficult mass struggle against mass petty-bourgeois influences. Under Soviet rule these same problems, which the anti-parliamentarians are now so proudly, so haughtily, so lightly and so childishly brushing aside with a wave of the hand -- these very same problems are arising anew within the Soviets, within the Soviet administration, among the Soviet "attorneys" (in Russia we have abolished, and have rightly abolished, the bourgeois legal bar, but it is reviving again under the guise of the "Soviet" "attorneys'. Among the Soviet engineers, the Soviet schoolteachers and the privileged, i.e., the most highly skilled and best situated, workers in the Soviet factories, we observe a constant revival of absolutely all the negative traits peculiar to bourgeois parliamentarism, and we are conquering this evil --

gradually -- only by tireless, constant, prolonged and persistent struggle, proletarian organization and discipline.

Of course, under the rule of the bourgeoisie it is very "difficult" to eradicate bourgeois habits from our own, i.e., the workers' party; it is "difficult" to expel from the Party the habitual parliamentary leader who has been hopelessly corrupted by bourgeois prejudices; it is "difficult" to subject to proletarian discipline the absolutely essential (even if very limited) number of people coming from the ranks of the bourgeoisie; it is "difficult" to form in a bourgeois parliament a communist group fully worthy of the working class; it is "difficult" to ensure that the communist parliamentarians do not play the bourgeois parliamentary game of skittles, but concern themselves with the very urgent work of propaganda, agitation and organization among the masses. All this is "difficult," to be sure; it was difficult in Russia, and it is incomparably more difficult in Western Europe and America, where the bourgeoisie is far stronger, where bourgeois-democratic traditions are stronger, and so on.

Yet all these "difficulties" are mere child's play compared with precisely the same sort of problems which in any event the proletariat will inevitably have to solve in order to achieve victory, both during the proletarian revolution and after the seizure of power by the proletariat. Compared with these truly gigantic problems of re-educating, under the proletarian dictatorship, millions of peasants and small masters, hundreds of thousands of office employees, officials and bourgeois intellectuals, of subordinating them all to the proletarian state and to proletarian leadership, of vanquishing their bourgeois habits and traditions -- compared with these gigantic problems

it is childishly easy to establish, under the rule of the bourgeoisie, in a bourgeois parliament, a really communist group of a real proletarian party.

If our "Left" and anti-parliamentarian comrades do not learn to overcome even such a small difficulty now, we may safely assert that either they will prove incapable of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat, will be unable to subordinate and remould the bourgeois intellectuals and bourgeois institutions on a wide scale, or they will have to complete their education in great haste, and by this haste will do a great deal of harm to the cause of the proletariat, they will commit more errors than usual, will manifest more than the average weakness and inefficiency, and so on and so forth.

As long as the bourgeoisie has not been overthrown, and after that as long as small-scale economy and small commodity production have not entirely disappeared, the bourgeois atmosphere, proprietary habits and petty-bourgeois traditions will hamper proletarian work both outside and inside the working-class movement, not only in one field of activity, parliamentary, but inevitably in every field of social activity, in all cultural and political spheres without exception. And the attempt to brush aside, to fence oneself off from one of the "unpleasant" problems or difficulties in one sphere of activity is a profound mistake, which will later most certainly have to be paid for. We must study and learn how to master every sphere of work and activity with out exception, to overcome all difficulties and all bourgeois habits, customs and traditions everywhere. Any other way of presenting the question is just trifling, just childishness.

May 12, 1920

V. I. Lenin

Draft Programme of the R.C.P.(B.)

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In the Political Sphere

Prior to the capture of political power by the proletariat it was (obligatory) necessary to make use of bourgeois democracy, parliamentarism in particular, for the political education and organisation of the working masses; now that the proletariat has won political power and a higher type of democracy is being put into effect in the Soviet Republic, any step backward to bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy would undoubtedly be reactionary service to the interests of the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists. Such catchwords as supposedly popular, national, general, extra-class but actually bourgeois democracy serve the interests of the exploiters alone, and as long as the land and other means of production remain private property the most democratic republic must inevitably remain a bourgeois dictatorship, a machine for the suppression of the overwhelming majority of working people by a handful of capitalists.

The historical task that has fallen to the lot of the Soviet Republic, a new type of state that is transitional until the state disappears altogether, is the following.

(1) The creation and development of universal mass organisations of precisely those classes that are oppressed under capitalism—the proletariat and semi-proletariat. A

bourgeois-democratic republic at best permits the organisation of the exploited masses, by declaring them free to organise, but actually has always placed countless obstacles in the way of their organisation, obstacles that were connected with the private ownership of the means of production in a way that made them irremovable. For the first time in history, Soviet power has not only greatly facilitated the organisation of the masses who were oppressed under capitalism but has made that organisation the essential permanent basis of the entire state apparatus, local and central, from top to bottom. Only in this way is it possible to ensure democracy for the great majority of the population (the working people), i.e,, actual participation in state administration, in contrast to the actual administration of the state mainly by members of the bourgeois classes as is the case in the most democratic bourgeois republics.

(2) The Soviet system of state administration gives a certain actual advantage to that section of the working people that all the capitalist development that preceded socialism has made the most concentrated, united, educated and steeled in the struggle, i.e., to the urban industrial proletariat. This advantage must be used systematically and unswervingly to counteract the narrow guild and narrow trade interests that capitalism fostered among the workers and which split them into competitive groups, by uniting the most backward and disunited masses of rural proletarians and semi-proletarians more closely with the advanced workers, by snatching them away from the influence of the village kulaks and village bourgeoisie, and organising and educating them for communist development.

(3) Bourgeois democracy that solemnly announced the equality of all citizens, in actual fact hypocritically concealed the domination of the capitalist exploiters and deceived the masses with the idea that the equality of exploiters and exploited is possible. The Soviet organisation of the state destroys this deception and this hypocrisy by the implementation of real democracy, i.e., the real equality of all working people, and by excluding the exploiters from the category of members of society possessing full rights. The experience of world history, the experience of all revolts of the exploited classes against their exploiters shows the inevitability of long and desperate resistance of the exploiters in their struggle to retain their privileges. Soviet state organisation is adapted to the suppression of that resistance, for unless it is suppressed there can be no question of a victorious communist revolution.

(4) The more direct influence of the working masses on state structure and administration—i.e., a higher form of democracy—is also effected under the Soviet type of state, first, by the electoral procedure and the possibility of holding elections more frequently, and also by conditions for re-election and for the recall of deputies which are simpler and more comprehensible to the urban and rural workers than is the case under the best forms of bourgeois democracy;

(5) secondly, by making the economic, industrial unit (factory) and not a territorial division the primary electoral unit and the nucleus of the state structure under Soviet power. This closer contact between the state apparatus and the masses of advanced proletarians that capitalism has united, in addition to effecting a higher level of democracy, also makes it possible to effect profound socialist reforms.

(6) Soviet organisation has made possible the creation of armed forces of workers and peasants which are much more closely connected with the working and exploited people than before. If this had not been done it would have been impossible to achieve one of the basic conditions for the victory of socialism—the arming of the workers and the disarming of the bourgeoisie.

(7) Soviet organisation has developed incomparably farther and deeper that feature of bourgeois democracy which marks historically its great progressive nature as compared with medieval times, i.e., the participation of the people in the election of individuals to office. In none of the most democratic bourgeois states have the working masses ever been able to enjoy the electoral rights formally granted them by the bourgeoisie (who actually hinder their enjoyment) anywhere near as extensively, frequently, universally, easily and simply as they are enjoyed under Soviet power. Soviet power has, at the same time, swept away those negative aspects of bourgeois democraythat the Paris Commune began to abolish, i.e., parliamentarism, or the separation of legislative and executive powers, the narrow, limited nature of which Marxism has long, since indicated. By merging the two aspects of government the Soviets bring the state apparatus closer to the working people and remove the fence of the bourgeois parliament that fooled the masses with hypocritical signboards concealing the financial and stock-exchange deals of' parliamentary businessmen and ensured the inviolability of the bourgeois apparatus of state administration.

(8) Soviet state organisation alone has enabled the proletarian revolution to smash the old bourgeois state apparatus at one blow and destroy it to the very foundations; had this not been

done no start could have been made on socialist development. Those strongholds of the bureaucracy which everywhere, both under monarchies and in the most democratic bourgeois republics, has always kept the state bound to the interests of the landowners and capitalists, have been destroyed in present-day Russia. The struggle against the bureaucracy, however, is certainly not over in our country. The bureaucracy is trying to regain some of its positions and is taking advantage, on the one hand, of the unsatisfactory cultural level of the masses of the people and, on the other, of the tremendous, almost superhuman war efforts of the most developed section of the urban 'workers. The continuation of the struggle against the bureaucracy, therefore, is absolutely necessary, is imperative, to ensure the success of future socialist development.

(9) Work in this field is closely connected with the implementation of the chief historical purpose of Soviet power, i.e., to advance towards the final abolition of the state, and should consist of the following. First, every member of a Soviet must, without fail, do a certain job of state administration; secondly, these jobs must be consistently changed so that they embrace all aspects of government, all its branches; and, thirdly, literally all the working population must be drawn into independent participation in state administration by means of a series of gradual measures that are carefully selected and unfailingly implemented.

(10) By and large, the difference between bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism on the one hand, and Soviet or proletarian democracy on the other, boils down to this: the centre of gravity of the former is in its solemn and pompous declarations of numerous liberties and rights which the majority of the

population, the workers and peasants, cannot enjoy to the full. Proletarian, or Soviet, democracy, on. the contrary, has transferred the centre of gravity away from the declaration of rights and liberties for the entire people to the actual participation of none but the working people, who were oppressed and exploited by capital, in the administration of the state, the actual use of the best buildings and other premises for meetings and congresses, the best printing-works arid the biggest warehouses (stocks) of paper for the education of those who were stultified and downtrodden under capitalism, and to providing a real (actual) opportunity for those masses gradually to free themselves from the burden of religious prejudices, etc., etc. It is precisely in making the benefits of culture, civilisation and democracy really available to the working and exploited people that Soviet power sees its most important work, work which it must continue unswervingly in the future.

The policy of the R.C.P. on the national question, unlike the bourgeois-democratic declaration of the equality of nations, which cannot be implemented under imperialism, is that of steadily drawing together and merging the proletarians and the working masses of all nations in their revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Among the working people of the nations that entered into the Russian Empite the mistrust of the Great Russians that has been inherited from the epoch of tsarist and bourgeois GreatRussian imperialism is rapidly vanishing, under the influence of their acquaintance with Soviet Russia, but that mistrust has not yet completely disappeared among all nations and among all sections of the working people. It is, therefore, necessary to exercise special caution in respect of national feelings and to ensure the pursuance of a

policy of actual equality and freedom to secede so as to remove the grounds for this mistrust and achieve the close voluntary union of the Soviet republics of all nations. Aid to backward and weak nations must be increased by assisting the independent organisation and education of the workers arid peasants of all nations in the struggle against medieval and bourgeois oppression and also by assisting in the development of the language and literature of nations that have been oppressed or have been underprivileged.

In respect of the policy on religion the task of the (R.C.P.) dictatorship of the proletariat must not be confined to decreeing the separation of the church from the state and the school from the church, that is, to measures promised by bourgeois democrats but never fully carried out anywhere in the world because of the many and varied connections actually existing between capital and religious propaganda. The proletarian dictatorship must completely destroy the connection between the exploiting classes—the landowners and capitalists—and the organisation of religious propaganda as something which keeps the masses in ignorance. The proletarian dictatorship must consistently effect the real emancipation of the working people from religious prejudices, doing so by means of propaganda and by raising the political consciousness of the masses but carefully avoiding anything that may hurt the feelings of the religious section of the population and serve to increase religious fanaticism.

In the sphere of public education, the object of the R.C.P. is to complete the work that began with the October Revolution in 1917 to convert the school from an instrument of the class rule of the bourgeoisie into an instrument for the overthrow of that

rule and for the complete abolition of the division of society into classes.

In the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., in the period in which conditions are being prepared for the full realisation of communism, the school must be the vehicle, not merely of the general principles of communism but also of the ideological, organisational and educational influence of the proletariat on the semi-proletarian and nonproletarian sections of the working people, in order to train a generation that is fully capable of building communism

The immediate tasks in this field are, for the present, the following.

(1) The implementation of free, obligatory general and polytechnical education (acquaintance with all the main branches of production theoretically and in practice) for all children of both sexes up to the age of 16.

(2) The closest connection between schooling and productive social labour.

(3) The provision of food, clothing, books and other teaching aids for all school children at the expense of the state.

(4) Greater agitation and propaganda among schoolteachers.

(5) The training of new teaching staffs imbued with communist ideas.

(6) The working people must be drawn into active participation, in the work of education (the development of the public education councils, mobilisation of the educated, etc.).

(7) All-round help on the part of Soviet power in the matter of the self-education and self-development of workers and working peasants (organisation of libraries, schools for adults, people's universities, courses of lectures, cinemas, studios, etc.).

(8) Development of the most extensive propaganda of communist ideas.

The Russian Communist Party, developing the general tasks of the Soviet government in greater detail, at present formulates them as follows.

J. V. Stalin

Concerning the Question of the Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists

March 14, 1923

Works, Vol. 5

This article is based on the lectures "On the Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists" that I delivered at different times at the workers' club in the Presnya District and to the Communist group at the Sverdlov University. I have decided to publish it not only because I think it is my duty to meet the wishes of the Presnya and Sverdlov comrades, but also because it seems to me that the article itself will be of some use for our new generation of Party workers. I consider it necessary to say, however, that this article does not claim to present anything new in substance compared with what has already been said several times in the Russian Party press by our leading comrades. The present article must be regarded as a condensed and schematic exposition of the fundamental views of Comrade Lenin.

I

Preliminary Concepts

1. Two Aspects of the Working-Class Movement

Political strategy, as well as tactics, is concerned with the working-class movement. But the working-class movement itself consists of two elements: the objective or spontaneous element, and the subjective or conscious element. The objective, spontaneous element is the group of processes that take place

independently of the conscious and regulating will of the proletariat. The economic development of the country, the development of capitalism, the disintegration of the old regime, the spontaneous movements of the proletariat and of the classes around it, the conflict of classes, etc.—all these are phenomena whose development does not depend on the will of the proletariat. That is the objective side of the movement. Strategy has nothing to do with those processes, for it can neither stop nor alter them; it can only take them into account and proceed from them. That is a field which has to be studied by the theory of Marxism and the programme of Marxism.

But the movement has also a subjective, conscious side. The subjective side of the movement is the reflection in the minds of the workers of the spontaneous processes of the movement; it is the conscious and systematic movement of the proletariat towards a definite goal. It is this side of the movement that interests us because, unlike the objective side, it is entirely subject to the directing influence of strategy and tactics. Whereas strategy is unable to cause any change in the course of the objective processes of the movement, here, on the contrary, on the subjective, conscious side of the movement, the field of application of strategy is broad and varied, because strategy can accelerate or retard the movement, direct it along the shortest path or divert it to a more difficult and painful path, depending on the perfections or shortcomings of strategy itself.

To accelerate or retard the movement, facilitate or hinder it—such is the field and the limits within which political strategy and tactics can be applied.

2. The Theory and Programme of Marxism

Strategy itself does not study the objective processes of the movement. Nevertheless, it must know them and take them into account correctly if gross and fatal errors in the leadership of the movement are to be avoided. The objective processes of the movement are studied, in the first place, by the theory of Marxism and also by the programme of Marxism. Hence, strategy must base itself entirely on the data provided by the theory and programme of Marxism.

From a study of the objective processes of capitalism in their development and decline, the theory of Marxism arrives at the conclusion that the fall of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of power by the proletariat are inevitable, that capitalism must inevitably give way to socialism. Proletarian strategy can be called truly Marxist only when its operations are based on this fundamental conclusion of the theory of Marxism.

Proceeding from the data of theory, the programme of Marxism determines the aims of the proletarian movement, which are scientifically formulated in the points of the programme. The programme may be designed to cover the whole period of capitalist development and have in view the overthrow of capitalism and the organisation of socialist production, or only one definite phase of the development of capitalism, for instance, the overthrow of the survivals of the feudal-absolutist system and the creation of conditions for the free development of capitalism. Accordingly, the programme may consist of two parts: a maximum and a minimum. It goes without saying that strategy designed for the minimum part of the programme is bound to differ from strategy designed for the maximum part; and strategy can be called truly Marxist only when it is guided

in its operations by the aims of the movement as formulated in the programme of Marxism.

3. Strategy

The most important function of strategy is to determine the main direction which ought to be taken by the working-class movement, and along which the proletariat can most advantageously deliver the main blow at its enemy in order to achieve the aims formulated in the programme. A strategic plan is a plan of the organisation of the decisive blow in the direction in which the blow is most likely to achieve the maximum results.

The principal features of political strategy could easily be described by drawing an analogy with military strategy: for instance, in the fight against Denikin during the Civil War. Everybody remembers the end of 1919, when Denikin's forces were standing near Tula. At that time an interesting dispute arose among our military men about the point from which the decisive blow at Denikin's armies should be delivered. Some military men proposed that the line Tsaritsyn-Novorossiisk be chosen for the main direction of the blow. Others, on the contrary, proposed that the decisive blow be delivered along the line Voronezh-Rostov, to proceed along this line and thus cut Denikin's armies in two and then crush each part separately. The first plan undoubtedly had its merits in that it provided for the capture of Novoros-siisk, which would have cut off the retreat of Denikin's armies. But, on the one hand, it was faulty because it assumed our advance through districts (the Don Region) which were hostile to Soviet power, and thus would have involved heavy casualties; on the other hand, it was dangerous because it opened for Denikin's armies the road to

Moscow via Tula and Serpukhov. The only correct plan for the main blow was the second one, because, on the one hand, it assumed the advance of our main group through districts (Voronezh Gubernia-Donets Basin) which were friendly towards Soviet power and, therefore, would not involve any considerable casualties; on the other hand, it would disrupt the operations of Denikin's main group of forces which were moving towards Moscow. The majority of the military men declared in favour of the second plan, and this determined the fate of the war against Denikin.

In other words, determining the direction of the main blow means deciding in advance the nature of operations during the whole period of the war, i.e., deciding in advance, to the extent of nine-tenths, the fate of the whole war. That is the function of strategy.

The same must be said about political strategy. The first serious, collision between the political leaders of the Russian proletariat on the question of the main direction of the proletarian movement took place at the beginning of the twentieth century, during the Russo-Japanese war. At that time, as we know, one section of our Party (the Mensheviks) held the view that the main direction of the proletarian movement in its struggle against tsarism should be along the line of a bloc between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie; the peasantry was omitted, or almost entirely omitted from the plan as a major revolutionary factor, while the leading role in the general revolutionary movement was assigned to the liberal bourgeoisie. The other section of the Party (the Bolsheviks) maintained, on the contrary, that the main blow should proceed along the line of a bloc between the proletariat and the

peasantry, and that the leading role in the general revolutionary movement should be assigned to the proletariat, while the liberal bourgeoisie should be neutralised.

If, by analogy with the war against Denikin, we depict our whole revolutionary movement, from the beginning of this century to the February Revolution in 1917, as a war waged by the workers and peasants against tsarism and the landlords, it will be clear that the fate of tsarism and of the landlords largely depended upon which of the two strategic plans (the Menshevik or the Bolshevik) would be adopted, and upon which direction would be chosen as the main direction of the revolutionary movement.

Just as during the war against Denikin military strategy, by deciding the main direction of the blow, determined to the extent of nine-tenths the character of all subsequent operations, including the liquidation of Denikin's armies, so here, in the sphere of the revolutionary struggle against tsarism, our political strategy, by deciding that the main direction of the revolutionary movement should follow the Bolshevik plan, determined the character of our Party's work during the whole period of the open struggle against tsarism, from the time of the Russo-Japanese war down to the February Revolution in 1917.

The function of political strategy is, primarily, on the basis of the data provided by the theory and programme of Marxism, and taking into account the experrience of the revolutionary struggle of the workers of all countries, correctly to determine the main direction of the proletarian movement of the given country in the given historical period.

4. Tactics

Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinated to and serving it. Tactics are not concerned with the war as a whole, but with its individual episodes, with battles and engagements. Strategy strives to win the war, or to carry through the struggle, against tsarism let us say, to the end; tactics, on the contrary, strive to win particular engagements and battles, to conduct particular campaigns successfully, or particular operations, that are more or less appropriate to the concrete situation of the struggle at each given moment.

A most important function of tactics is to determine the ways and means, the forms and methods of fighting that are most appropriate to the concrete situation at the given moment and are most certain to prepare the way for strategic success. Consequently, the operation and results of tactics must be regarded not in isolation, not from the point of view of their immediate effect, but from the point of view of the aims and possibilities of strategy.

There are times when tactical successes facilitate the achievement of strategic aims. Such was the case, for instance, on the Denikin front at the end of 1919, when our troops liberated Orel and Voronezh, when the successes of our cavalry at Voronezh and of our infantry at Orel created a situation favourable for delivering the blow at Rostov. Such was the case in August 1917 in Russia, when the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets came over to the side of the Bolsheviks and thereby created a new political situation, which subsequently facilitated the blow delivered by our Party in October.

There are also times when tactical successes, brilliant from the point of view of their immediate effect but not corresponding to the strategic possibilities, create an "unexpected" situation,

fatal to the whole campaign. Such was the case with Denikin at the end of 1919 when, carried away by the easy success of a rapid and striking advance on Moscow, he stretched his front from the Volga to the Dnieper, and thereby prepared the way for the defeat of his armies. Such was the case in 1920, during the war against the Poles, when, under-estimating the strength of the national factor in Poland, and carried away by the easy success of a striking advance, we undertook a task that was beyond our strength, the task of breaking into Europe via Warsaw, which rallied the vast majority of the Polish population against the Soviet forces and so created a situation which nullified the successes of the Soviet forces at Minsk and Zhitomir and damaged the Soviet Government's prestige in the West.

Lastly, there are also times when a tactical success must be ignored and when tactical losses and reverses must be deliberately incurred in order to ensure future strategic gains. This often happens in time of war, when one side, wishing to save its army cadres and to withdraw them from the onslaught of superior enemy forces, begins a systematic retreat and surrenders whole cities and regions without a fight in order to gain time and to muster its forces for new decisive battles in the future. Such was the case in Russia in 1918, during the German offensive, when our Party was forced to accept the Brest Peace, which was a tremendous setback from the point of view of the immediate political effect at that moment, in order to preserve the alliance with the peasants, who were thirsting for peace, to obtain a respite, to create a new army and thereby ensure strategic gains in the future.

In other words, tactics must not be subordinated to the transient interests of the moment, they must not be guided by considerations of immediate political effect, still less must they desert firm ground and build castles in the air. Tactics must be devised in accordance with the aims and possibilities of strategy.

The function of tactics is primarily to determine— in accordance with the requirements of strategy, and taking into account the experience of the workers' revolutionary struggle in all countries—the forms and methods of fighting most appropriate to the concrete situation of the struggle at each given moment.

5. Forms of Struggle

The methods of warfare, the forms of war, are not always the same. They change in accordance with the conditions of development, primarily, in accordance with the development of production. In the time of Genghis Khan the methods of warfare were different from those in the time of Napoleon III; in the twentieth century they are different from those in the nineteenth century.

The art of war under modern conditions consists in mastering all forms of warfare and all the achievements of science in this sphere, utilising them intelligently, combining them skilfully, or making timely use of one or another of these forms as circumstances require.

The same must be said about the forms of struggle in the political sphere. The forms of struggle in the political sphere are even more varied than the forms of warfare. They change in accordance with the development of economic life, social life

and culture, with the condition of classes, the relation of the contending forces, the kind of government and, finally, with international relations, and so forth. The illegal form of struggle under absolutism, combined with partial strikes and workers' demonstrations; the open form of struggle when "legal possibilities" exist, and workers' mass political strikes; the parliamentary form of struggle at the time, say, of the Duma, and extra-parliamentary mass action which sometimes develops into armed uprising; lastly, state forms of struggle, after the proletariat has taken power and obtains the opportunity to utilise all the resources and forces of the state, including the army—such, in general, are the forms of struggle that are brought to the fore by the practical experience of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

It is the task of the Party to master all forms of struggle, to combine them intelligently on the battlefield and skilfully to intensify the struggle in those forms which are specially suitable in the given situation.

6. Forms of Organisation

The forms of organisation of armies and the different arms of the service are usually adapted to the forms and methods of warfare. When the latter change, the former change. In a war of manoeuvre the issue is often decided by massed cavalry. In positional warfare, on the contrary, cavalry plays either no part at all, or plays a subordinate part; heavy artillery and aircraft, gas and tanks decide everything.

The task of the art of war is to ensure having all arms of the service, bring them to perfection and skilfully combine their operations.

The same can be said about the forms of organisation in the political sphere. Here, as in the military sphere, the forms of organisation are adapted to the forms of the struggle. Secret organisations of professional revolutionaries in the period of absolutism; educational, trade-union, co-operative and parliamentary organisations (the Duma group, etc.) in the period of the Duma; factory and workshop committees, peasant committees, strike committees, Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, revolutionary military committees, and a broad proletarian party which unites all these forms of organisation, in the period of mass action and insurrection; finally, the state form of organisation of the proletariat in the period when power is concentrated in the hands of the working class—such, in general, are the forms of organisation on which, under certain conditions, the proletariat can and must rely in its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The task of the Party is to master all these forms of organisation, bring them to perfection and skilfully combine their operations at each given moment.

7. The Slogan. The Directive

Skilfully formulated decisions which express the aims of the war, or of individual engagements, and which are popular among the troops, are sometimes of decisive importance at the front as a means of inspiring the army to action, of maintaining its morale, and so forth. Appropriate orders, slogans, or appeals to the troops are as important for the whole course of a war as first-class heavy artillery, or first-class fast-moving tanks.

Slogans are still more important in the political sphere, when one has to deal with tens and hundreds of millions of the population, with their diverse demands and requirements.

A slogan is a concise and clear formulation of the aims of the struggle, near or remote, given by the leading group, let us say, of the proletariat, by its party. Slogans vary in accordance with the different aims of the struggle, aims embracing either a whole historical period or individual stages and episodes of the given historical period. The slogan "Down with the autocracy" which was first advanced by the "Emancipation of Labour" group 3 in the ‘eighties of the last century, was a propaganda slogan, since its aim was to win over to the Party individuals and groups of the most steadfast and sturdy fighters. In the period of the Russo-Japanese war, when the instability of the autocracy became more or less evident to large sections of the working class, this slogan became an agitation slogan, for it was designed to win over vast masses of the toilers. In the period just before the February Revolution of 1917, when tsarism had already become completely discredited in the eyes of the masses, the slogan "Down with the autocracy" was transformed from an agitation slogan into an action slogan, since it was designed to move vast masses into the assault on tsarism. During the February Revolution this slogan became a Party directive, i.e., a direct call to seize certain institutions and certain positions of the tsarist system on a definite date, for it was already a matter of overthrowing and destroying tsarism. A directive is the Party's direct call for action, at a certain time and in a certain place, binding upon all members of the Party and, if the call correctly and aptly formulates the demands of the masses, and if the time is really ripe for it, it is usually taken up by the broad masses of the toilers.

To confuse slogans with directives, or an agitation slogan with an action slogan, is as dangerous as premature or belated action, which is sometimes fatal. In April 1917, the slogan "All power to the Soviets" was an agitation slogan. The well-known demonstration which took place in Petrograd in April 1917 under the slogan "All power to the Soviets," and which surrounded the Winter Palace, was an attempt, premature and therefore fatal, to convert this slogan into an action slogan.4 That was a very dangerous example of the confusion of an agitation slogan with an action slogan. The Party was right when it condemned the initiators of this demonstration, for it knew that the conditions necessary for the transformation of this slogan into an action slogan had not yet arisen, and that premature action on the part of the proletariat might result in the defeat of its forces.

On the other hand, there are cases when the Party is faced with the necessity of cancelling or changing "overnight" an adopted slogan (or directive) for which the time is ripe, in order to guard its ranks against a trap set by the enemy, or with the necessity of postponing the execution of the directive to a more favourable moment. Such a case arose in Petrograd in June 1917, when, because the situation had changed, the Central Committee of our Party "suddenly" cancelled the workers' and soldiers' demonstration, which had been carefully prepared and fixed to take place on June 10.

It is the Party's duty skilfully and opportunely to transform agitation slogans into action slogans, or action slogans into definite and concrete directives, or, if the situation demands it, to display the necessary flexibility and determination to cancel

the execution of any given slogan in good time, even if it is popular and the time is ripe for it.

II

The Strategic Plan

1. Historic Turns. Strategic Plans

The Party's strategy is not something constant, fixed once and for all. It alters in accordance with the turns in history, with historic changes. These alterations in strategy find expression in the fact that with each separate turn in history a separate strategic plan is drawn up corresponding to that turn, and effective during the whole period from that turn to the next. The strategic plan defines the direction of the main blow to be delivered by the revolutionary forces and the corresponding disposition of the vast masses on the social front. Naturally, a strategic plan suitable for one period of history, which has its own specific features, cannot be suitable for another period of history, which has entirely different specific features. Corresponding to each turn in history is the strategic plan essential for it and adapted to its tasks.

The same may be said about the conduct of war. The strategic plan that was drawn up for the war against Kolchak could not have been suitable for the war against Denikin, which called for a new strategic plan, which, in its turn, would not have been suitable for, say, the war against the Poles in 1920, because the direction of the main blows, as well as the disposition of the main fighting forces, could not but be different in each of these three cases.

The recent history of Russia knows of three main historic turns, which gave rise to three different strategic plans in the history of our Party. We consider it necessary to describe them briefly in order to show how the Party's strategic plans in general change in conformity with new historic changes.

2. The First Historic Turn and the Course Towards the Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution in Russia

This turn began at the beginning of the present century, in the period of the Russo-Japanese war, when the defeat of the tsar's armies and the tremendous political strikes of the Russian workers stirred up all classes of the population and pushed them into the arena of the political struggle. This turn came to an end in the days of the February Revolution in 1917.

During this period two strategic plans were at issue in our Party: the plan of the Mensheviks (Plekhanov-Martov, 1905), and the plan of the Bolsheviks (Comrade Lenin, 1905).

The Menshevik strategy planned the main blow at tsarism along the line of a coalition between the liberal bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Proceeding from the fact that at that time the revolution was regarded as a bourgeois revolution, this plan assigned the hegemony (leadership) of the movement to the liberal bourgeoisie and doomed the proletariat to the role of "extreme left opposition," to the role of "prompter" to the bourgeoisie, while the peasantry, one of the major revolutionary forces, was entirely, or almost entirely, left out of account. It is easy to understand that since this plan left out of account the millions of peasants in a country like Russia it was hopelessly utopian, and since it placed the fate of the revolution in the hands of the liberal bourgeoisie (the hegemony of the

bourgeoisie) it was reactionary, for the liberal bourgeoisie was not interested in achieving the complete victory of the re

The Bolshevik strategy (see Comrade Lenin's book Two Tactics 5) planned the revolution's main blow at tsarism along the line of a coalition between the proletariat and the peasantry, while the liberal bourgeoisie was to be neutralised. Proceeding from the fact that the liberal bourgeoisie was not interested in the complete victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, that it preferred a deal with tsarism at the expense of the workers and peasants to the victory of the revolution, this plan assigned the hegemony of the revolutionary movement to the proletariat as the only completely revolutionary class in Russia. This plan was remarkable not only because it took into account correctly the driving forces of the revolution, but also because it contained in embryo the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat (the hegemony of the proletariat), because it brilliantly foresaw the next, higher phase of the revolution in Russia and facilitated the transition to it.

The subsequent development of the revolution right up to February 1917 fully confirmed the correctness of this strategic plan.

3. The Second Historic Turn and the Course Towards the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia

The second turn began with the February Revolution in 1917, after tsarism was overthrown, when the imperialist war had exposed the fatal ulcers of capitalism all over the world; when the liberal bourgeoisie, incapable of taking in its hands the actual government of the country, was compelled to confine itself to holding formal power (the Provisional Government);

when the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, after getting actual power into their hands, had neither the experience nor the will to make the necessary use of it; when the soldiers at the front and the workers and peasants in the rear were groaning under the burdens of the war and economic disruption; when the "dual power" and "contact committee" 6 regime, torn by internal contradictions and capable neither of waging war nor of bringing about peace, not only failed to find "a way out of the impasse" but confused the situation still more. This period ended with the October Revolution in 1917.

Two strategic plans were at issue in the Soviets at that time: the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary plan, and the Bolshevik plan.

The Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary strategy, vacillating at first between the Soviets and the Provisional Government, between revolution and counter-revolution, took final shape at the time of the opening of the Democratic Conference (September 1917). It took the line of the gradual but steady removal of the Soviets from power and the concentration of all power in the country in the hands of the "Pre-parliament," the prototype of a future bourgeois parliament. The questions of peace and war, the agrarian and labour questions, as well as the national question, were shelved, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, which, in its turn, was postponed for an indefinite period. "All power to the Constituent Assembly"—this was how the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks formulated their strategic plan. It was a plan for the preparation of a bourgeois dictatorship, a combed and brushed-up, "perfectly democratic" dictatorship it is true, but a bourgeois dictatorship for all that.

The Bolshevik strategy (see Comrade Lenin's "Theses," published in April 1917 7) planned the main blow along the line of liquidating the power of the bourgeoisie by the combined forces of the proletariat and the poor peasants, along the line of organising the dictatorship of the proletariat in the shape of a Soviet Republic. Rupture with imperialism and withdrawal from the war; liberation of the oppressed nationalities of the former Russian Empire; expropriation of the landlords and capitalists; preparation of the conditions for organising socialist economy—such were the elements of the Bolsheviks' strategic plan in that period. "All power to the Soviets"—this was how the Bolsheviks then formulated their strategic plan. This plan was important not only because it took into account correctly the actual driving forces of the new, proletarian revolution in Russia, but also because it facilitated and accelerated the unleashing of the revolutionary movement in the West.

Subsequent developments right up to the October Revolution fully confirmed the correctness of this strategic plan.

4. The Third Historic Turn and the Course Towards the Proletarian Revolution in Europe

The third turn began with the October Revolution, when the mortal combat between the two imperialist groups in the West had reached its climax; when the revolutionary crisis in the West was obviously growing; when the bourgeois government in Russia, bankrupt and entangled in contradictions, fell under the blows of the proletarian revolution; when the victorious proletarian revolution broke with imperialism and withdrew from the war, and thereby made bitter enemies in the shape of imperialist coalitions in the West; when the new Soviet

Government's decrees on peace, the confiscation of the landlords' land, the expropriation of the capitalists and the liberation of the oppressed nationalities earned for it the confidence of millions of toilers throughout the world. This was a turn on an international scale, because, for the first time, the international front of capital was breached, the question of overthrowing capitalism was for the first time put on a practical footing. This transformed the October Revolution from a national, Russian force into an international force, and the Russian workers from a backward detachment of the international proletariat into its vanguard, which by its devoted struggle rouses the workers of the West and the oppressed countries of the East. This turn has not yet come to the end of its development, for it has not yet developed on an international scale, but its content and general direction are already sufficiently clear.

Two strategic plans were at issue in political circles in Russia at that time: the plan of the counter-revolutionaries, who had drawn into their organisations the active sections of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the plan of the Bolsheviks.

The counter-revolutionaries and active Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks planned along the line of uniting in one camp all the discontented elements: the old army officers in the rear and at the front, the bourgeois-nationalist governments in the border regions, the capitalists and landlords who had been expropriated by the revolution, the agents of the Entente who were preparing for intervention, and so forth. They steered a course towards the overthrow of the

Soviet Government by means of revolts or foreign intervention, and the restoration of the capitalist order in Russia.

The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, planned along the line of internally strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and extending the sphere of operation of the proletarian revolution to all countries of the world by combining the efforts of the proletarians of Russia with the efforts of the proletarians of Europe and with the efforts of the oppressed nations of the East against world imperialism. Highly noteworthy is the exact and concise formulation of this strategic plan given by Comrade Lenin in his pamphlet The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, namely: "To do the utmost possible in one country (one's own— J. St.) for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries." The value of this strategic plan lies not only in that it took into account correctly the driving forces of the world revolution, but also in that it foresaw and facilitated the subsequent process of transformation of Soviet Russia into the focus of attention of the revolutionary movement throughout the world, into the banner of liberation of the workers in the West and of the colonies in the East.

The subsequent development of the revolution all over the world, and also the five years' existence of Soviet power in Russia, have fully confirmed the correctness of this strategic plan. The fact that the counterrevolutionaries, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshe-viks, who made several attempts to overthrow the Soviet Government, are now emigres, while the Soviet Government and the international proletarian organisation are becoming the major instruments of the policy

of the world proletariat, and other facts of this kind, are obvious testimony in favour of the Bolsheviks' strategic plan.

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The 1891 Preface to Marx's "The Civil War in France"

In his preface to the third edition of The Civil War in France (this preface is dated March 18, 1891, and was originally published in Neue Zeit), Engels, in addition to some interesting incidental remarks on questions concerning the attitude towards the state, gave a remarkably vivid summary of the lessons of the Commune.[6] This summary, made more profound by the entire experience of the 20 years that separated the author from the Commune, and directed expressly against the "superstitious belief in the state" so widespread in Germany, may justly be called the last word of Marxism on the question under consideration.

In France, Engels observed, the workers emerged with arms from every revolution: "therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois, who were at the helm of the state. Hence, after every revolution won by the workers, a new struggle, ending with the defeat of the workers."

This summary of the experience of bourgeois revolutions is as concise as it is expressive. The essence of the matter--among other things, on the question of the state (has the oppressed class arms?)--is here remarkably well-grasped. It is precisely this essence that is most often evaded by both professors influenced by bourgeois ideology, and by petty-bourgeois democrats. In the Russian revolution of 1917, the honor (Cavaignac honor) of blabbing this secret of bourgeois revolutions fell to the Menshevik, would-be Marxist, Tsereteli. In his “historic” speech of June 11, Tsereteli blurted out that the

bourgeoisie were determined to disarm the Petrograd workers--presenting, of course, this decision as his own, and as a necessity for the "state" in general!

Tsereteli's historical speech of June 11 will, of course, serve every historian of the revolution of 1917 as a graphic illustration of how the Social-Revolutionary and Menshevik bloc, led by Mr. Tsereteli, deserted to the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat.

Another incidental remark of Engels', also connected with the question of the state, deals with religion. It is well-known that the German Social-Democrats, as they degenerated and became increasingly opportunist, slipped more and more frequently into the philistine misinterpretation of the celebrated formula: "Religion is to be declared a private matter." That is, the formula was twisted to mean that religion was a private matter even for the party of the revolutionary proletariat!! It was against this complete betrayal of the revolutionary programme of the proletariat that Engels vigorously protested. In 1891 he saw only the very feeble beginnings of opportunism in his party, and, therefore, he expressed himself with extreme caution:

"As almost only workers, or recognized representatives of the workers, sat in the Commune, its decisions bore a decidedly proletarian character. Either they decreed reforms which the republican bourgeoisie had failed to pass solely out of cowardice, but which provided a necessary basis for the free activity of the working class--such as the realization of the principle that in relation to the state religion is a purely private matter--or the Commune promulgated decrees which were in the direct interest of the working class and in part cut deeply into the old order of society."

Engels deliberately emphasized the words "in relation to the state" as a straight thrust at at German opportunism, which had declared religion to be a private matter in relation to the party, thus degrading the party of the revolutionary proletariat to the level of the most vulgar "free- thinking" philistinism, which is prepared to allow a non-denominational status, but which renounces the party struggle against the opium of religion which stupifies the people.

The future historian of the German Social-Democrats, in tracing the roots of their shameful bankruptcy in 1914, will find a fair amount of interesting material on this question, beginning with the evasive declarations in the articles of the party's ideological leader, Kautsky, which throw the door wide open to opportunism, and ending with the attitude of the party towards the "Los-von-Kirche-Bewegung"[7] (the "Leave-the-Church" movement) in 1913.

But let us see how, 20 years after the Commune, Engels summed up its lessons for the fighting proletariat.

Here are the lessons to which Engels attached prime importance:

"... It was precisely the oppressing power of the former centralized government, army, political parties, bureaucracy, which Napoleon had created in 1798 and which every new government had since then taken over as a welcome instrument and used against its opponents--it was this power which was to fall everywhere, just as it had fallen in Paris.

"From the very outset the Commune had to recognize that the working class, once in power, could not go on managing with the old state machine; that in order not to lose again its only

just-gained supremacy, this working class must, on the one hand, do away with all the old machinery of oppression previously used against it itself, and, on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all, without exception, subject to recall at any time...."

Engels emphasized once again that not only under a monarchy, but also under a democratic republic the state remains a state, i.e., it retains its fundamental distinguishing feature of transforming the officials, the 'servants of society", its organs, into the masters of society.

"Against this transformation of the state and the organs of the state from servants of society into masters of society--an inevitable transformation in all previous states--the Commune used two infallible means. In the first place, it filled all posts--administrative, judicial, and educational--by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, subject to recall at any time by the electors. And, in the second place, it paid all officials, high or low, only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs. In this way a dependable barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the binding mandates to delegates to representative bodies, which were added besides...."

Engels here approached the interesting boundary line at which consistent democracy, on the one hand, is transformed into socialism and, on the other, demands socialism. For, in order to abolish the state, it is necessary to convert the functions of the civil service into the simple operations of control and accounting that are within the scope and ability of the vast majority of the population, and, subsequently, of every single

individual. And if careerism is to be abolished completely, it must be made impossible for “honorable” though profitless posts in the Civil Service to be used as a springboard to highly lucrative posts in banks or joint-stock companies, as constantly happens in all the freest capitalist countries.

Engels, however, did not make the mistake some Marxists make in dealing, for example, with the question of the right of nations to self- determination, when they argue that is is impossible under capitalism and will be superfluous under socialism. This seemingly clever but actually incorrect statement might be made in regard to any democratic institution, including moderate salaries for officials, because fully consistent democracy is impossible under capitalism, and under socialism all democracy will wither away.

This is a sophism like the old joke about a man becoming bald by losing one more hair.

To develop democracy to the utmost, to find the forms for this development, to test them by practice, and so fort--all this is one of the component tasks of the struggle for the social revolution. Taken separately, no kind of democracy will bring socialism. But in actual life democracy will never be "taken separately"; it will be "taken together" with other things, it will exert its influence on economic life as well, will stimulate its transformation; and in its turn it will be influenced by economic development, and so on. This is the dialectics of living history.

Engels continued:

"... This shattering [Sprengung] of the former state power and its replacement by a new and truly democratic one is described in detail in the third section of The Civil War. But it was

necessary to touch briefly here once more on some of its features, because in Germany particularly the superstitious belief in the state has passed from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers. According to the philosophical conception, the state is the 'realization of the idea', or the Kingdom of God on earth, translated into philosophical terms, the sphere in which eternal truth and justice are, or should be, realized. And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the state and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily since people are accustomed from childhood to imagine that the affairs and interests common to the whole of society could not be looked after other than as they have been looked after in the past, that is, through the state and its lucratively positioned officials. And people think they have taken quite an extraordinary bold step forward when they have rid themselves of belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy. And at best it is an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the victorious proletariat will have to lop off as speedily as possible, just as the Commune had to, until a generation reared in new, free social conditions is able to discard the entire lumber of the state."

Engels warned the Germans not to forget the principles of socialism with regard to the state in general in connection with the substitution of a republic for the monarchy. His warnings now read like a veritable lesson to the Tseretelis and Chernovs, who in their “coalition” practice have revealed a superstitious belief in, and a superstitious reverence for, the state!

Two more remarks. 1. Engels' statement that in a democratic republic, "no less" than in a monarchy, the state remains a "machine for the oppression of one class by another" by no means signifies that the form of oppression makes no difference to the proletariat, as some anarchists “teach”. A wider, freer and more open form of the class struggle and of class oppression vastly assists the proletariat in its struggle for the abolition of classes in general.

2. Why will only a new generation be able to discard the entire lumber of the state? This question is bound up with that of overcoming democracy, with which we shall deal now.

Engels on the Overcoming of Democracy

Engels came to express his views on this subject when establishing that the term "Social-Democrat" was scientifically wrong.

In a preface to an edition of his articles of the seventies on various subjects, mostly on “international” questions (Internationales aus dem Volkstaat), dated January 3, 1894, i.e., written a year and a half before his death, Engels wrote that in all his articles he used the word “Communist”, and not "Social-Democrat", because at that time the Proudhonists in France and the Lassalleans[8] in Germany called themselves Social-Democrats.

"... For Marx and myself," continued Engels, "it was therefore absolutely impossible to use such a loose term to characterize our special point of view. Today things are different, and the word ["Social-Democrat"] may perhaps pass muster [mag passieren], inexact [unpassend, unsuitable] though it still is for a party whose economic programme is not merely socialist in

general, but downright communist, and whose ultimate political aim is to overcome the whole state and, consequently, democracy as well. The names of real political parties, however, are never wholly appropriate; the party develops while the name stays."

The dialectician Engels remained true to dialectics to the end of his days. Marx and I, he said, had a splendid, scientifically exact name for the party, but there was no real party, i.e., no mass proletarian party. Now (at the end of the 19th century) there was a real party, but its name was scientifically wrong. Never mind, it would "pass muster", so long as the party developed, so long as the scientific in accuracy of the name was not hidden from it and did not hinder its development on the right direction!

Perhaps some wit would console us Bolsheviks in the manner of Engels: we have a real party, it is developing splendidly; even such a meaningless and ugly term as “Bolshevik” will "pass muster", although it expresses nothing whatever but the purely accidental fact that at the Brussels-London Congress of 1903 we were in the majority. Perhaps now that the persecution of our Party by republicans and “revolutionary” petty-bourgeois democrats in July and August has earned the name “Bolshevik” such universal respect, now that, in addition, this persecution marks the tremendous historical progress our Party has made in its real development--perhaps now even I might hesitate to insist on the suggestion I made in April to change the name of our Party. Perhaps I would propose a “compromise” to my comrades, namely, to call ourselves the Communist Party, but to retain the word “Bolshevik” in brackets.

But the question of the name of the Party is incomparably less important than the question of the attitude of the revolutionary proletariat to the state.

In the usual argument about the state, the mistake is constantly made against which Engels warned and which we have in passing indicated above, namely, it is constantly forgotten that the abolition of the state means also the abolition of democracy; that the withering away of the state means the withering away of democracy.

At first sight this assertion seems exceedingly strange and incomprehensible; indeed, someone may even suspect us of expecting the advent of a system of society in which the principle of subordination of the minority to the majority will not be observed--for democracy means the recognition of this very principle.

No, democracy is not identical with the subordination of the minority to the majority. Democracy is a state which recognizes the subordination of the minority to the majority, i.e., an organization for the systematic use of force by one class against another, by one section of the population against another.

We set ourselves the ultimate aim of abolishing the state, i.e., all organized and systematic violence, all use of violence against people in general. We do not expect the advent of a system of society in which the principle of subordination of the minority to the majority will not be observed. In striving for socialism, however, we are convinced that it will develop into communism and, therefore, that the need for violence against people in general, for the subordination of one man to another, and of one section of the population to another, will vanish

altogether since people will become accustomed to observing the elementary conditions of social life without violence and without subordination.

In order to emphasize this element of habit, Engels speaks of a new generation, "reared in new, free social conditions", which will "be able to discard the entire lumber of the state"--of any state, including the democratic-republican state.

In order to explain this, it is necessary to analyze he economic basis of the withering away of the state.

Controversy with the Anarchists

This controversy took place in 1873. Marx and Engels contributed articles against the Proudhonists, "autonomists" or "anti-authoritarians," to an Italian Socialist annual, and it was not until 1913 that these articles appeared in German in Neue Zeit.

". . . If the political struggle of the working class assumes revolutionary forms," wrote Marx, ridiculing the anarchists for their repudiation of politics, "if the workers set up their revolutionary dictatorship in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, they commit the terrible crime of violating principles, for in order to satisfy their wretched, vulgar, everyday needs, in order to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, they give the state a revolutionary and transient form, instead of laying down their arms and abolishing the state. . . ." (Neue Zeit, Vol. XXXII, I, 1913-14, p. 40.)

It was solely against this kind of "abolition" of the state that Marx fought in refuting the anarchists! He did not at all combat the view that the state would disappear when classes disappeared, or that it would be abolished when classes were abolished; he opposed the proposition that the workers should renounce the use of arms, of organized violence, that is, the state, which is to serve to "crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie."

To prevent the true meaning of his struggle against anarchism from being distorted, Marx purposely emphasized the

"revolutionary and transient form" of the state which the proletariat needs. The proletariat needs the state only temporarily. We do not at all disagree with the anarchists on the question of the abolition of the state as the aim. We maintain that, to achieve this aim, we must ternporarily make use of the instruments, resources and methods of the state power against the exploiters, just as the temporary dictatorship of the oppressed class is necessary for the abolition of classes. Marx chooses the sharpest and clearest way of stating his case against the anarchists: after overthrowing the yoke of the capitalists, should the workers "lay down their arms," or use them against the capitalists in order to crush their resistance? But what is the systematic use of arms by one class against another class, if not a "transient form" of state?

Let every Social-Democrat ask himself: is that the way he has been treating the question of the state in controversy with the anarchists? Is that the way it has been treated by the vast majority of the official Socialist parties of the Second International?

Engels expounds the same ideas in much greater detail and still more popularly. First of all he ridicules the muddled ideas of the Proudhonists, who called themselves "anti-authoritarians," i.e., repudiated every form of authority, every form of subordination, every form of power. Take a factory, a railway, a ship on the high seas, said Engels -- is it not clear that not one of these complex technical establishments, based on the employment of machinery and the planned cooperation of many pcople, could function without a certain amount of subordination and, consequently, without a certain amount of authority or power?

". . . When I submitted arguments like these to the most rabid anti-authoritarians the only answer they were able to give me was the following: Yes, that's true, but here it is not a case of authority which we confer on our delegates, but of a commission entrusted ! These gentlemen think that when they have changed the names of things they have changed the things themselves. . . ."

Having thus shown that authority and autonomy are relative terms, that the sphere of their application changes with the various phases of social development, that it is absurd to take them as absolutes, and adding that the sphere of the application of machinery and large-scale production is constantly expanding, Engels passes from the general discussion of authority to the question of the state:

". . . If the autonomists," he wrote, "confined themselves to saying that the social organization of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable, we could understand each other; but they are blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately fight the word.

"Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All Socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that

gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority.

"Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon -- authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough? Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction." (P. 39.)

This argument touches upon questions which must be examined in connection with the subject of the relation between politics and economics during the "withering away" of the state (this subject is dealt with in the next chapter). These questions are: the transformation of public functions from political into simple functions of administration, and the "political state." This last term, one particularly liable to cause misunderstanding, indicates the process of the withering away of the state: at a certain stage of this process the state which is withering away can be called a non-political state.

Again, the most remarkable thing in this argument of Engels is the way he states the case against the anarchists. Social-

Democrats, claiming to be disciples of Engels, have argued on this subject against the anarchists millions of times since 1873, but they have n o t argued as Marxists can and should. The anarchist idea of the abolition of the state is muddled and non-revoiutionary -- that is how Engels put it. It is precisely the revolution in its rise and development, with its specific tasks in relation to violence, authority, power, the state, that the anarchists do not wish to see.

The usual criticism of anarchism by present-day Social-Democrats has boiled down to the purest philistine banality: "We recognize the state, whereas the anachists do not!" Naturally, such banality cannot but repel workers who are in the least capable of thinking and revolutionary. What Engels says is different. He emphasizes the fact that all Socialists recognize that the state will disappear as a result of the socialist revolution. He then deals concretely with the question of the revolution -- the very question which, as a rule, the Social-Democrats, because of their opportunism, evade, and leave, so to speak, exclusively for the anarchists "to work out." And, when dealing with this question, Engels takes the bull by the horns; he asks: should not the Commune have made more use of the revolutionary power of the state, that is, of the proletariat armed and organized as the ruling class?

Prevailing official Social-Democracy usually dismissed the question of the concrete tasks of the proletariat in the revolution either with a philistine sneer, at best, with the sophistic evasion: "wait and see." And the anarchists were thus justified in saying about such Social-Democracy that it was betraying its task of giving the workers a revolutionary education. Engels draws upon the experience of the last proletarian revolution precisely

for the purpose of making a most concrete study of what should be done by the proletariat, and in what manner, in relation to both the banks and the state.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution

III.

The Vulgar Bourgeois Representation of Dictatorship and Marx's View of It

Mehring[4] tells us in his notes to Marx's articles from the Neue Rheinische Zeitung of 1848 that he published, that one of the reproaches levelled at this newspaper by bourgeois publications was that it had allegedly demanded "the immediate introduction of a dictatorship as the sole means of achieving democracy" (Marx, Nachlass, Volume III, p. 53). From the vulgar bourgeois standpoint the terms dictatorship and democracy are mutually exclusive. Failing to understand the theory of class struggle, and accustomed to seeing in the political arena the petty squabbling of the various bourgeois circles and coteries, the bourgeois conceives dictatorship to mean the annulment of all the liberties and guarantees of democracy, tyranny of every kind, and every sort of abuse of power in the personal interests of a dictator. In essence, it is precisely this vulgar bourgeois view that is manifested in the writings of our Martynov, who winds up his "new campaign" in the new Iskra by attributing the partiality of the Vperyod and the Proletary for the slogan of dictatorship to Lenin's "passionate desire to try his luck" (Iskra, No. 103, p. 3, col. 2). In order to explain to Martynov the meaning of the term class dictatorship as distinct from personal dictatorship, and the tasks of a democratic dictatorship as distinct from those of a socialist dictatorship, it would not be amiss to dwell on the views of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung.

"Every provisional organisation of the state after a revolution," wrote the Neue Rheinische Zeitung on September 14, 1848, "requires a dictatorship, and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we have reproached Camphausen" (the head of the Ministry after March 8, 1848) "for not acting dictatorially, for not having immediately smashed up and eliminated the remnants of the old institutions. And while Herr Camphausen was lulling himself with constitutional illusions, the defeated party (i.e., the party of reaction) strengthened its positions in the bureaucracy, and in the army, and here and there even began to venture upon open struggle."

These words, Mehring justly remarks, sum up in a few propositions all that was propounded in detail in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung in long articles on the Camphausen Ministry. What do these words of Marx tell us? That a provisional revolutionary government must act dictatorially (a proposition which the Iskra was totally unable to grasp since it was fighting shy of the slogan: dictatorship) and that the task of such a dictatorship is to destroy the remnants of the old institutions (which is precisely what was clearly stated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party about the struggle against counterrevolution, and what was omitted in the resolution of the Conference, as we showed above). Thirdly, and lastly, it follows from these words that Marx castigated the bourgeois democrats for entertaining "constitutional illusions" in a period of revolution and open civil war. The meaning of these words becomes particularly obvious from the article in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung of June 6, l848. "A Constituent National Assembly," wrote Marx, "must first of all be an active, revolutionary-active assembly. The Frankfurt Assembly,

however, is busying itself with school exercises in parliamentarism while allowing the government to act. Let us assume that this learned assembly succeeds after mature consideration in working out the best possible agenda and the best possible constitution. But what is the use of the best possible agenda and of the best possible constitution, if the German governments have in the meantime placed the bayonet on the agenda?"

That is the meaning of the slogan: dictatorship. We can judge from this what Marx's attitude would have been towards resolutions which call a "decision to organise a constituent assembly" a decisive victory, or which invite us to "remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition"!

Major questions in the life of nations are settled only by force. The reactionary classes themselves are usually the first to resort to violence, to civil war; they are the first to "place the bayonet on the agenda," as the Russian autocracy has been doing systematically and undeviatingly everywhere ever since January 9. And since such a situation has arisen, since the bayonet has really become the main point on the political agenda, since insurrection has proved to be imperative and urgent—constitutional illusions and school exercises in parliamentarism become only a screen for the bourgeois betrayal of the revolution, a screen to conceal the fact that the bourgeoisie is "recoiling" from the revolution. It is therefore the slogan of dictatorship that the genuinely revolutionary class must advance.

On the question of the tasks of this dictatorship Marx wrote, already in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung [of June 6, l848]: "The National Assembly should have acted dictatorially against the

reactionary attempts of the obsolete governments; the force of public opinion in its favour would then have been so strong as to shatter all bayonets.... But this Assembly bores the German people instead of carrying the people with it or being carried away by it [them]."[7] In Marx's opinion, the National Assembly should have "eliminated from the regime actually existing in Germany everything that contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the people," then it should have "consolidated the revolutionary ground on which it stands in order to make the sovereignty of the people, won by the revolution, secure against all attacks."[8]

Thus, the tasks which Marx set before a revolutionary government or dictatorship in 1848 amounted in substance primarily to a democratic revolution: defence against counterrevolution and the actual elimination of everything that contradicted the sovereignty of the people. This is nothing else than a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship.

To proceed: which classes, in Marx's opinion, could and should have achieved this task (actually to exercise to the full the principle of the sovereignty of the people and to beat off the attacks of the counterrevolution)? Marx speaks of the "people." But we know that he always ruthlessly combated the petty-bourgeois illusions about the unity of the "people" and about the absence of a class struggle within the people. In using the word "people," Marx did not thereby gloss over class distinctions, but combined definite elements that were capable of carrying the revolution to completion.

After the victory of the Berlin proletariat on March 18, wrote the Neue Rheinische Zeitung[of June 14, 1848], the results of the revolution proved to be twofold: "On the one hand the arming

of the people, the right of association, the sovereignty of the people actually attained; on the other hand, the preservation of the monarchy and the Camphausen-Hansemann Ministry, i.e., the government of representatives of the big bourgeoisie. Thus, the revolution had two series of results, which had inevitably to diverge. The people had achieved victory, it had won liberties of a decisive democratic nature, but the direct power passed not into its hands, but into those of the big bourgeoisie. In a word, the revolution was not completed. The people allowed the big bourgeois to form a ministry, and the big bourgeois immediately displayed their strivings by offering an alliance to the old Prussian nobility and bureaucracy. Arnim, Canitz and Schwerin joined the Ministry.

"The upper bourgeoisie, ever anti-revolutionary, concluded a defensive end offensive alliance with the reaction out of fear of the people, that is to say, the workers and the democratic bourgeoisie."

Thus, not only a "decision to organise a constituent assembly," but even its actual convocation is insufficient for a decisive victory of the revolution! Even after a partial victory in an armed struggle (the victory of the Berlin workers over the troops on March 18, 1848) an "incomplete" revolution, a revolution "that has not been carried to completion," is possible. On what, then, does its completion depend? It depends on whose hands the immediate rule passes into, whether into the hands of the Petrunkeviches and Rodichevs, that is to say, the Camphausens and the Hansemanns, or into the hands of the people, i.e., the workers and the democratic bourgeoisie. In the first case the bourgeoisie will possess power, and the proletariat "freedom of criticism." freedom to "remain

the party of extreme revolutionary opposition." Immediately after the victory, the bourgeoisie will conclude an alliance with the reaction (this would inevitably happen in Russia too, if, for example, the St. Petersburg workers gained only a partial victory in street fighting with the troops and left it to Messrs. Petrunkeviches and Co. to form a government). In the second case, a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, i.e., the complete victory of the revolution, would be possible.

It now remains to define more precisely what Marx really meant by "democratic bourgeoisie" (demokratische Bürgerschaft), which together with the workers he called the people, in contradistinction to the big bourgeoisie.

A clear answer to this question is supplied by the following passage from an article in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung of July 30, 1848: "...The German revolution of 1848 is only a parody of the French revolution of 1789.

"On August 4, 1789, three weeks after the storming of the Bastille, the French people in a single day prevailed over all the feudal burdens.

"On July 11, 1848, four months after the March barricades, the feudal burdens prevailed over the German people. Teste Gierke cum Hansemanno.

"The French bourgeoisie of 1789 did not for a moment leave its allies, the peasants, in the lurch. It knew that the foundation of its rule was the destruction of feudalism in the countryside, the creation of a free landowning (grundbesitzenden) peasant class.

"The German bourgeoisie of 1848 is without the least compunction betraying the peasants, who are its most natural

allies, the flesh of its flesh, and without whom it is powerless against the nobility.

"The continuance of feudal rights, their sanction under the guise of (illusory) redemption—such is the result of the German revolution of 1848. The mountain brought forth a mouse."

This is a very instructive passage: it gives us four important propositions: 1) The incompleted German revolution differs from the completed French revolution in that the German bourgeoisie betrayed not only democracy in general, but also the peasantry in particular. 2) The foundation for the full consummation of a democratic revolution is the creation of a free class of peasants. 3) The creation of such a class means the abolition of feudal burdens, the destruction of feudalism, but does not yet mean a socialist revolution. 4) The peasants are the "most natural" allies of the bourgeoisie, that is to say, of the democratic bourgeoisie, which without them is "powerless" against the reaction.

Making proper allowances for concrete national peculiarities and substituting serfdom for feudalism, all these propositions can be fully applied to Russia in 1905. There is no doubt that by learning from the experience of Germany, as elucidated by Marx, we cannot arrive at any other slogan for a decisive victory of the revolution than: a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that the chief components of the "people," whom Marx in 1848 contrasted with the resisting reactionaries and the treacherous bourgeoisie, are the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that in Russia too the liberal bourgeoisie and the gentlemen of the Osvobozhdeniye League are betraying and will continue to betray the peasantry, i.e., will confine

themselves to a pseudo reform and taking the side of the landlords in the decisive battle between them and the peasantry. Only the proletariat is capable of supporting the peasantry to the end in this struggle. There is no doubt, finally, that in Russia also the success of the peasant struggle, i.e., the transfer of the whole of the land to the peasantry, will signify a complete democratic revolution and constitute the social support of the revolution carried to its completion, but it will by no means be a socialist revolution, or "socialisation" that the ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries talk about. The success of the peasant insurrection, the victory of the democratic revolution will merely clear the way for a genuine and decisive struggle for Socialism on the basis of a democratic republic. In this struggle the peasantry as a landowning class will play the same treacherous, vacillating part as is now being played by the bourgeoisie in the struggle for democracy. To forget this is to forget Socialism, to deceive oneself and others as to the real interests and tasks of the proletariat.

In order to leave no gaps in the presentation of the views held by Marx in 1848, it is necessary to note one essential difference between German Social-Democracy of that time (or the Communist Party of the Proletariat, to use the language of that period) and present-day Russian Social Democracy. Here is what Mehring says:

"The Neue Rheinische Zeitung appeared in the political arena as the 'organ of democracy.' There is no mistaking the thread that ran through all its articles. But in the direct sense, it championed the interests of the bourgeois revolution against

absolutism and feudalism more than the interests of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Very little is to be found in its columns about the separate working-class movement during the years of the revolution, although one should not forget that along with it there appeared twice a week, under the editorship of Moll and Schapper, a special organ of the Cologne Workers' League [Zeitung des Arbeiter-Vereins zu Köln] At any rate, the present day reader will be struck by the little attention the Neue Rheinische Zeitung paid to the German working-class movement of its day, although its most capable mind, Stephan Born, was a pupil of Marx and Engels in Paris and Brussels and in 1848 was the Berlin correspondent for their newspaper. Born relates in his Memoirs that Marx and Engels never expressed a single word in disapproval of his agitation among the workers; nevertheless, it appears probable from subsequent declarations of Engels' that they were dissatisfied, at least with the methods of this agitation. Their dissatisfaction was justified inasmuch as Born was obliged to make many concessions to the as yet totally undeveloped class consciousness of the proletariat in the greater part of Germany, concessions which do not stand the test of criticism from the viewpoint of the Communist Manifesto. Their dissatisfaction was unjustified inasmuch as Born managed nonetheless to maintain the agitation conducted by him on a relatively high plane. . . . Without doubt, Marx and Engels were historically and politically right in thinking that the primary interest of the working class was to push the bourgeois revolution forward as far as possible. . . . Nevertheless, a remarkable proof of how the elementary instinct of the working-class movement is able to correct the conceptions of the greatest minds is provided by the fact that in April 1849 they declared in favour of a specific workers' organisation and

decided to participate in the workers' congress, which was being prepared especially by the East Elbe (Eastern Prussia) proletariat."

Thus, it was only in April 1849, after the revolutionary newspaper had been appearing for almost a year (the Neue Rheinische Zeitung began publication on June 1, 1848) that Marx and Engels declared in favour of a special workers' organisation! Until then they were merely running an "organ of democracy" unconnected by any organisational ties with an independent workers' party. This fact, monstrous and improbable as it may appear from our present-day standpoint, clearly shows us what an enormous difference there is between the German Social-Democratic Party of those days and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party of today. This fact shows how much less the proletarian features of the movement, the proletarian current within it, were in evidence in the German democratic revolution (because of the backwardness of Germany in 1848 both economically and politically—its disunity as a state). This should not be forgotten in judging Marx's repeated declarations during this period and somewhat later about the need for organising an independent proletarian party. Marx arrived at this practical conclusion only as a result of the experience of the democratic revolution, almost a year later—so philistine, so petty-bourgeois was the whole atmosphere in Germany at that time. To us this conclusion is an old and solid acquisition of half a century's experience of international Social-Democracy—an acquisition with which we began to organise the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. In our case there can be no question, for instance, of revolutionary proletarian newspapers being outside the Social-

Democratic Party of the proletariat, or of their appearing even for a moment simply as "organs of democracy."

But the contrast which had hardly begun to reveal itself between Marx and Stephan Born exists in our case in a form which is more developed by reason of the more powerful manifestation of the proletarian current in the democratic stream of our revolution. Speaking of the probable dissatisfaction of Marx and Engels with the agitation conducted by Stephan Born, Mehring expresses himself too mildly and too evasively. Here is what Engels wrote of Born in 1885 (in his preface to the Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprocess zu Köln. Zürich, 1885

The members of the Communist League everywhere stood at the head of the extreme democratic movement, proving thereby that the League was an excellent school of revolutionary action. ". . . the compositor Stephan Born, who had worked in Brussels and Paris as an active member of the League, founded a Workers' Brotherhood" ("Arbeiterverbruderung") "in Berlin which became fairly widespread and existed until 1850. Born, a very talented young man, who, however, was a bit too much in a hurry to become a big political figure, 'fraternised' with the most miscellaneous ragtag and bobtail" (Kreti und Plethi) "in order to get a crowd together, and was not at all the man who could bring unity into the conflicting tendencies, light into the chaos. Consequently, in the official publications of the association the views represented in the Communist Manifesto were mingled hodgepodge with guild recollections and guild aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.; in short, they wanted to please everybody [allen alles sein]." "In particular, strikes, trade unions and

producers' co-operatives were set going and it was forgotten that above all it was a question of first conquering, by means of political victories, the field in which alone such things could be realised on a lasting basis." (Our italics.) "When, afterwards. the victories of the reaction made the leaders of the Brotherhood realise the necessity of taking a direct part in the revolutionary struggle, they were naturally left in the lurch by the confused mass which they had grouped around themselves. Born took part in the Dresden uprising in May, 1849 and had a lucky escape. But, in contrast to the great political movement of the proletariat, the Workers' Brotherhood proved to be a pure Sonderbund [separate league], which to a large extent existed only on paper and played such a subordinate role that the reaction did not find it necessary to suppress it until 1850, and its surviving branches until several years later. Born, whose real name was Buttermilch has not become a big political figure but a petty Swiss professor, who no longer translates Marx into guild language but the meek Renan into his own fulsome German."

That is how Engels judged the two tactics of Social Democracy in the democratic revolution!

Our new-Iskraists are also pushing towards "Economism," and with such unreasonable zeal as to earn the praises of the monarchist bourgeoisie for their "seeing the light." They too collect around themselves a motley crowd, flattering the "Economists," demagogically attracting the undeveloped masses by the slogans of "initiative," "democracy," "autonomy," etc., etc. Their labour unions, too, exist only on the pages of the Khlestakov-type new Iskra. Their slogans and

resolutions betray a similar failure to understand the tasks of the "great political movement of the proletariat."

V. I. Lenin

Report on the Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.

A Letter to the St. Petersburg Workers

May 1906

Attitude Towards the State Duma

On the question of the Duma, the reporter from the faction that predominated at the Congress was Comrade Axel rod. He too, in a long speech, refrained from discussing the comparative merits of the two resolutions (the committee submitted two resolutions, because the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks could not reach agreement), from stating in precise terms the views of the Minority on this question, but gave a "general outline" of the meaning of parliamentarism. He went far afield, took a long excursion into history, and drew a picture of parliamentarism, of its significance, its role in the development of proletarian organisation, in agitation, in the awakening of the class-consciousness of the proletariat, and so forth. Casting innuendoes all the time at "anarchistic-conspiratorial" views, he soared entirely in the realm of abstractions, in the lofty sphere of platitudes and magnificent reflections on history which were applicable to all times, to all nations and to all periods in history in general: but which, owing to their abstract character, were useless for dealing with the concrete features of the concrete matter in hand. I remember the following particularly glaring example of the incredibly abstract, vapid and general way in which Axelrod presented his case. Twice in his speech (I made a note of this) he touched on the question of bargains, or agreements, between the Social-Democrats and the Cadets. Once he touched on it in passing, spoke of it in

disparaging terms, and in a word or two expressed his opposition to all agreement. The second time he dealt with it at greater length and said that, speaking generally, agreements were permissible, except that they must not be hole-and-corner doings by committees, but public agreements visible and clear to all the workers, and must represent important political steps, or actions. Such agreements, he said, would enhance the significance of the proletariat as a political force, would-more clearly and distinctly reveal to it the machinery of politics and the different positions and different interests of the various classes. They would draw the proletariat into definite political relationships, teach it to see its enemies and ill-wishers, and so on and so forth. It was arguments of this kind that Comrade Axelrod's very long "report" consisted of. One can not relate them—one can only give an idea of them by giving an example or two.

In my report in reply I said, first of all, that Axelrod had painted a very pretty, in fact, a charming picture. He had painted it lovingly and skilfully, applying vivid colours and fine strokes. The only pity was that the picture was not drawn from life. It was a fine picture—there could be no doubt about that—but its subject was purely imaginary. It was a splendid study on the theme of the significance of parliamentarism in general, a fine popular lecture on the functions of representative institutions. The only pity was that he said and explained absolutely nothing about the concrete historical conditions of the existing Russian "parliament", if one may call it that. Axelrod, I said, had given himself entirely away by his remarks on agreements with the Cadets. He had admitted that the importance of such agreements—sometimes inevitable when genuine parliamentarism exists—depended on the possibility of coming

out openly before the masses, on the possibility of banishing the old "hole-and-corner" method and substituting for it agitation among the masses, the in dependence of the masses, and public utterances before the masses.

Magnificent things, sure enough. But are they possible under the Russian "parliamentary" system? Or rather, is this the form that real mass actions take in Russia under the present real (and not pictorial) objective conditions? Is it not the case, Comrade Axelrod, that Social-Democrats are obliged to make the appeals to the masses that you desire by means of illegal leaflets, while the Cadets have newspapers printed in millions of copies at their disposal? Would it not have been better if, instead of uselessly depicting the charms of parliamentarism (which nobody denies), you had told us how matters really stand as regards Social-Democratic newspapers, meetings, clubs, and unions? Surely there is no need for me to prove to you, a European, that your general remarks about parliamentarism tacitly presuppose news papers, meetings, clubs and unions, and that all these are part and parcel of the parliamentary system?

Why did Axelrod in his report confine himself to platitudes and abstract propositions? In order to leave in the back ground the concrete political realities of Russia in the period February-April 1906. These realities reveal much too sharp antagonisms between the autocracy and the downtrodden but indignant proletariat and peasantry. To charm his audience with the picture of parliamentarism in general, he had to tone down these antagonisms, to blunt them, to draw an "ideal" plan of an ideal, open agreement with the Cadets; and above all he had to

make an abstraction of these sharp antagonisms, forget them, say nothing about them.

In order to assess our actual disagreements and not to soar in the skies, I, in my report, compared the two resolutions and analysed them in detail. It appeared that there were four main points of difference between the Menshevik and Bolshevik resolutions on the Duma.

First, the Mensheviks made no appraisal of the elections. At the time of the Congress the elections had been held in nine-tenths of Russia. These elections had undoubtedly provided ample political material for a realistic, and not fanciful, picture of the situation. We weighed up this material very frankly and carefully, and said: it shows that in the vast majority of places in Russia participation in the elections meant supporting the Cadets, and that it was not really a Social-Democratic policy. The Mensheviks say not a word about this. They are afraid to put the question on a concrete basis. They are afraid to face the facts and to draw the necessary conclusions from this position between the Cadets and the Black Hundreds. They do not appraise the actual elections, their results as a whole, because such an appraisal would prove them wrong.

Secondly, throughout their resolution the Mensheviks take, or regard, the Duma as a legal institution, and not as an instrument that expresses the will (or lack of will) of certain elements of the bourgeoisie, not as an instrument that serves the interests of certain bourgeois parties. In their resolution, they speak of the Duma in general, of the Duma as an "institution", as an instrument of popular representation in its "pure" form. This is not a Marxist method of argument but a purely Cadet method; not a materialist but an ideal ist method, in the worst

sense of the word; not a proletarian class method, but one of philistine vagueness.

Take, for example, the following extremely characteristic expression in the Menshevik resolution, I said at the Congress: "(4) that these conflicts [with reaction I, compelling the State Duma to seek support among the broad masses..." (I am quoting from the draft which the Mensheviks submitted to the Congress). Is it true to say that the Duma can and will seek support among the broad masses? Which Duma? An Octobrist Duma? Certainly not. A Duma of peasants' and workers' deputies? It has no need to seek support, for it has, has had, and will have support. A Cadet Duma? Yes, this is true as regards such a Duma, and only such a Duma. A Cadet Duma certainly has to seek support among the broad masses. But as soon as you give the Mensheviks' abstract, idealistic and general formulation a definitely class content, you at once see that its wording is incomplete, and therefore wrong. The Cadets strive to lean on the people. That is true. That is word for word what our (Bolshevik) resolution on the attitude to wards the bourgeois parties says about them. But our resolution goes on to say that the Cadets waver between the desire to lean on the people and fear of its revolutionary independence. No socialist will dare deny the justice of the words I have underlined. Why, then, did the Mensheviks, in a resolution on the Duma, when it was already known that the Duma would be Cadet in character, tell only half the truth? Why did they only note the bright side of the Cadets, and say nothing about the reverse side of the medal?

Our Duma is not the incarnation of the "pure idea" of popular representation. Only bourgeois philistines among our Cadet

professors can think so. Our Duma is what the representatives in it of definite classes and definite parties make of it. Our Duma is a Cadet Duma. If we say that it is striving to lean on the people and do not add that it is afraid of independent revolutionary activity by the people, we will be telling a downright lie, we will be misleading the proletariat and the whole people. We will be yielding in the most unpardonable way to the mood of the moment, and show that we are under the spell of the victories of a party that wavers between liberty and the monarchy, that we are incapable of appraising the true nature of that party. The Cadets, of course, will praise us for this reticence, but will the class-conscious workers do as much?

Another example. "The tsarist government is striving to check the revolutionary upsurge," say the Mensheviks in their resolution. That is true. But is it only the tsarist government that is striving to do that? Have not the Cadets shown a thousand times already that they, too, are striving both to lean on the people and to check its revolutionary up surge? Is it proper for Social-Democrats to put the Cadets in a better light than they deserve?

And I drew the following conclusion. Our resolution says that the Duma will indirectly help to develop the revolution. This is the only correct formula, for the Cadets waver between revolution and reaction. Speaking about the Duma, our resolution plainly and bluntly says that the in stability of the Cadets must be exposed. To say nothing about this in a resolution on the Duma means indulging in a bourgeois idealisation of "popular representation in its pure form".

And practical experience has already begun to refute the Mensheviks' illusions. In Nevskaya Gazeta,[2] you will even

now find statements (not systematically consistent, unfortunately) to the effect that the Cadets in the Duma have not been behaving in a revolutionary way and that the proletariat will not permit "deals between the Milyukovs and the old regime". In saying this, the Mensheviks fully bear out the correctness of my criticism of their resolution at the Congress. In saying this, they are following in the wake of the revolutionary tide, which, although relatively weak, has already begun to reveal the true nature of the Cadets, and is already proving that the Bolshevik presentation of the question is correct.

Thirdly, I said, the Menshevik resolution does not draw a clear distinction between the various types of bourgeois democrats from the point of view of proletarian tactics. The proletariat must, to a certain extent, march with the bourgeois democrats, or "march separately, but strike together. But with which section of the bourgeois democrats must the proletariat "strike together", in the present Duma period? You yourselves,Menshevik comrades, realise that the very existence of the Duma is bringing up this question—yet you dodge it. We, however, have said plainly and bluntly: with the peasant or revolutionary democrats, neutralising, by our agreement with them, the instability and inconsistency of the Cadets.

In reply to this criticism, the Mensheviks (especially Plekhanov, who, I repeat, was the actual ideological leader of the Mensheviks at the Congress) tried to make their position more profound". Yes, they exclaimed, you want to expose the Cadets! But we are exposing all the bourgeois parties. Look at the last part of our resolution: "to reveal to the masses the inconsistency of all the bourgeois parties etc. And Plekhanov proudly added

that only bourgeois radicals attack solely the Cadets; we socialists expose all the bourgeois parties.

The sophistry hidden in this seeming "deepening" of the question was resorted to so often at the Congress, and is so often resorted to now, that it is worth saying a few words about it.

What is this resolution about? Is it the socialist exposure of all bourgeois parties, or defining which section of the bourgeois democrats can help the proletariat now to carry the bourgeois revolution still further forward?

Clearly, it deals with the latter and not with the former question.

If that is clear, there is no point in substituting the first question for the second. As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the bourgeois parties, the Bolshevik resolution clearly speaks of the socialist exposure of all bourgeois democracy, including that of revolutionary and peasant democrats. But as far as present-day proletarian tactics are concerned, the question is not one of socialist criticism, but of mutual political support.

The further the bourgeois revolution advances, the farther left the proletariat seeks for allies among the bourgeois democrats, and the deeper it goes from their upper ranks to their lower ranks. There was a time when help could come from Marshals of the Nobility and from Mr. Struve, who (in 1901) put forward the Shipov slogan: "Rights and an Authoritative Zemstvo".[3] The revolution has gone far beyond that. The upper ranks of the bourgeois democrats have be gun to desert the revolution. The lower ranks have begun to awaken. The proletariat has begun to seek allies (for a bourgeois revolution) in the lower ranks of the bourgeois democrats. And today, the only correct definition

of the tactics of the proletariat in this respect will be: with the peasantry (who are also bourgeois democrats: don't forget this, Menshevik comrades) and with the revolutionary democrats, paralysing the instability of the Cadets.

And again. Whose line have the first steps of the Cadet Duma proved correct? Reality has already outstripped our debates. Reality has compelled even Nevskaya Gazeta to single out the Peasant ("Trudovik") Group[4] in preference to the Cadets, to seek a rapprochement with it and to expose the Cadets. Reality has proved that we were right in our watch word: the proletariat's allies until the victory of the bourgeois revolution is achieved are the peasant and revolutionary democrats.

Fourthly, I criticised the last clause of the Menshevik resolution concerning a Social-Democratic group in the Duma. I pointed out that the great bulk of the class-conscious proletariat had not voted. Would it be advisable under these conditions to impose official representatives of the Party on this mass of workers? Can the Party guarantee that the candidates had really been chosen by Party organisations? Will not the fact that the first Social-Democratic members of the Duma are expected to come from the peasant and town petty-bourgeois curias create a certain danger and an abnormal situation? The first candidates of the Social-Democratic Labour Party to the Duma, not chosen by the workers' organisations, and not under their control.... Comrade Nazar's[5] amendment, which demanded that Social-Democratic candidates to the Duma be nominated by local workers' organisations, was rejected by the Mensheviks. We demanded a vote by roll-call, and recorded our dissenting opinion in the minutes.

We voted for the amendment moved by the comrades from the Caucasus (to participate in the elections where they have not yet taken place, but not to enter into any blocs with other parties), because the prohibition of blocs, of agreements with other parties, was undoubtedly of great political significance for the Party.

I will add that the Congress rejected the amendment of Comrade Yermansky (a Menshevik who regarded himself as a conciliator), who wanted participation in the elections to be permitted only in those cases where it was possible to carry on agitation among the masses and to organise them on a large scale.

The representatives of the national Social-Democratic parties— the Poles, Bundists and, I think, also the Letts— took part in the debate on this question, and emphatically declared for the boycott. They stressed the necessity of taking specific local conditions into account, and protested against the settlement of a question like this on the basis of abstract arguments.

On the question of the formation of a Social-Democratic group in the Duma, the Congress also passed an instruction to the Central Committee, which, unfortunately, was not included in the decisions of the Congress published by the Central Committee. The Congress instructed the Central Committee to inform all Party organisations specifically: (1) whom, (2) when, and (3) on what conditions it has appointed as Party representatives in the parliamentary group, and also to submit periodical reports of the activities of these Party representatives.[6] This resolution instructs the local workers' organisations to which the Social-Democratic deputies in the Duma belong to keep control over their "delegates" in the

Duma. I will mention, in parenthesis, that this important resolution, which shows that the views of Social-Democrats on parliamentarism differ from those of bourgeois politicians, was unanimously condemned, or ridiculed, both in Mr. Struve's newspaper Duma and in Novoye Vremya.

Lastly, in concluding my narrative of the debate on the State Duma, I will mention two more episodes. The first was the speech of Comrade Akimov, who had been invited to at tend the Congress as a consultative delegate. For the information of those comrades who are not familiar with the history of our Party, I will say that since the late t1890s Comrade Akimov has been the most consistent, or one of the most consistent, opportunists in the Party. Even the new Iskra has had to admit this. Akimov was an "Economist"[8] in 1899 and subsequent years, and has remained true to type. Mr. Struve, in Osvobozhdeniye, has extolled him more than once for his "realism" and for the scholarly quality of his Marxism. There is hardly any difference between Comrade Akimov and the Bernsteinians of Bez Zaglavia (Mr. Prokopovich and others). Naturally, the presence at the Congress of such a comrade could not but be valuable in the struggle between the Right and Left wings of Social-Democracy.

Comrade Akimov was the first to speak after the reporters on the question of the State Duma. He said that he did not agree with the Mensheviks on many points, but he fully agreed with Comrade Axelrod. He was in favour not only of going into the Duma, but also of supporting the Cadets. Comrade Akimov was the only consistent Menshevik at the Congress in openly standing up for the Cadets (and not in a covert way, not by saying, for example, that the Cadets were more important than

the Socialist-Revolutionaries). He openly rose in arms against the appraisal of the Cadets that I made in my pamphlet The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party. The Cadets, he said, "are really a party of people's freedom, but a more moderate one". The Cadets are "orphan democrats", said our orphan Social-Democrat. "The Mensheviks have to put up artificial barriers to prevent themselves from becoming accomplices of the Cadets."

The reader will see that Comrade Akimov's speech merely served as additional and convincing evidence of the direction our Menshevik comrades are taking.

The second episode showed this from another angle. This is what happened. In the original draft of the Menshevik resolution on the State Duma proposed by the commit tee, Clause 5 (on the armed forces) contained the following sentence: ... "Seeing for the first time on Russian soil a new authority, sprung from the depths of the nation, called into being by the tsar himself and recognised by the law", etc. In criticising the Menshevik resolution for what may mildly be called its imprudent and optimistic attitude towards the State Duma, I also criticised the words I have underlined, and said jestingly: should we not add "and sent by God's grace" (meaning authority)? Comrade Plekhanov, a member of

the committee, was frightfully angry with me for cracking this joke. What, he exclaimed in his speech, must I listen to these "suspicions of being an opportunist"? (His exact words, as I wrote them down.) I have served in the army myself, and I know the military man's attitude towards authority; I know of

the importance he attaches to authority recognised by the tsar, etc., etc. Comrade Plekhanov's resentment exposed his vulnerable spot, and showed still more clearly that he had "overdone it". In my speech in reply to the debate, I said that it was not a matter of "suspicions", and it was ridiculous to use such pitiful expressions. Nobody was accusing Plekhanov of believing in the tsar. But resolutions are not written for Plekhanov; they are written for the people. And it was indecent to disseminate among the people such ambiguous arguments, fit only for Messrs. Witte and Co. These arguments would turn against us, for if we stressed that the State Duma was an "authority" (?? this word alone reveals the excessive optimism of our Mensheviks), and an authority called into being by the tsar, then it would be inferred that this lawful authority must act according to the law, and obey the one who "called it into being".

The Mensheviks themselves realised that Plekhanov had overdone it. On a motion that came from their ranks, the words underlined above were deleted from the resolution.

Collected Works, Volume 10, pages 317-382.

Lenin

The Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. May 1906
Collected Works Volume 10, pages 277-309.

Co-Report on the Question of the Attitude Towards the State Duma

Comrades, I will not read you the Bolshevik resolution, as in all probability you are all familiar with it. (Nevertheless, in response to requests from delegates, the speaker reads the Bolshevik resolution again.) If you compare this resolution with that of the Mensheviks, you will find the following four main points of difference, or four main defects in the latter:

(1) The Menshevik resolution contains no appraisal of the elections, no assessment of the objective results of our political experience in this field.

(2) This resolution is permeated with an imprudent, to put it mildly, or optimistic attitude towards the State Duma.

(3) The resolution does not clearly distinguish the various trends or parties among the bourgeois democrats, from the point of view of our tactics towards them.

(4) Your resolution proposes that a parliamentary group be formed under conditions and at a time when the value of such a step for the proletarian party cannot in any way be proved.

Such are the real disagreements between us, if we examine our disagreements seriously, and not seize upon words or trivialities.

Let us examine these four points.

It is highly important to sum up our experience of the elections if we want to base our conclusions on the actual alignment of political forces, and not on general phrases about parliamentarism in general, and so forth. We have advanced, and advance today, the very definite proposition that participation in the elections really means supporting the Cadets; that participation is impossible without blocs with the Cadets. Do you analyse the substance of this pro position? Do you examine the situation in the light of the actual facts on this question? Nothing of the kind. Axelrod completely evaded the first two points, and on the next two he made two contradictory statements. At first he referred to blocs with the Cadets in general in the most disparaging terms. Then he said that he would have no objection to such blocs, provided, of course, they were not arranged by the old hole-and-corner methods and backstairs agreements, but by public and direct methods visible to the whole proletariat. This last "proposition" of Axelrod's is a magnificent specimen of "Cadet" dreaming, of real "pious wishes" engendered by constitutional illusions. In reality we have no constitution and no basis for open activities; what we have is Dubasov "constitutionalism". Axelrod's dreams will remain empty dreams, while the Cadets will obtain real benefit from the agreements, tacit or signed, formal or informal.

And when people talk about our "self-elimination" from the elections, they always forget that it was the political conditions and not our desire that kept our Party out; kept it out of newspapers and meetings; prevented us from putting up prominent members of the Party as candidates. In these circumstances, parliamentarism is a futile and pitiful game rather than a means of educating the proletariat. It is naive to

take parliamentarism "in its pure form", as an "idea", isolated from the real situation.

When people talk about the elections they usually forget that actually the contest took place, on the basis of Dubasov constitutionalism, between two strong "parties"—the Cadets and the Black Hundreds. The Cadets were right when they told the voters that any split in the vote, any nomination of "third" candidates, could lead only to the victory of the Black Hundreds. Take the case of Moscow, for example. Guchkov receives, say, 900 votes and the Cadet, 1,300. It would have been enough for the Social-Democrats to obtain 401 votes for the Black-Hundred candidate to win. Thus the Cadets rightly understood the significance of Social- Democratic participation in the elections (they gave the Moscow workers a seat in the State Duma as a reward for participating in the elections), while you Mensheviks misunderstand its significance and thus indulge in an empty and idle dream. Either don't take up parliamentarism and don't talk commonplaces about it, or take it up seriously. Your present position is no use at all.

The second point. Axelrod in his speech even more glaringly revealed the defects in the resolution that I have point ed to. The resolution speaks of transforming the Duma into an instrument of the revolution. You regard the Duma exclusively in the light of the pressure the government exercises on us, of the government's efforts to crush the revolution. We regard the State Duma as a body that represents a definite class, as an institution that has a definite party composition. Your argument is absolutely wrong, incomplete and non-Marxist in its approach. You fail to take into account the Duma's internal structure, which is conditioned by the class composition of the

Cadet Party. You say that the government is strangling the revolution, but you forget to add that the Cadets have already fully displayed their desire to extinguish it. A Cadet Duma cannot but display the characteristics of the Cadet Party. You completely overlook the example of the Frankfurt Parliament which, although a representative institution in a revolutionary period, betrayed an obvious desire to extinguish the revolution (owing to the petty-bourgeois narrow-mindedness and cowardice of the Frankfurt windbags).

The reference to "authority recognised by the tsar and established by law", is most unfortunate in a Social-Democratic resolution. The Duma is not really an authority. The reference to the law does not strengthen, but weakens your whole argument and all your agitational slogans that follow from this resolution. Witte will most readily of all appeal to the "law" and to the "will of the tsar", in thwarting the slightest attempt of the Duma to go beyond the ridiculously narrow limits of its powers. Not the Social-Democrats, but Russkoye Gosudarstvo stands to gain by these references to the tsar and the law.

I come now to the third point. A fundamental mistake in the resolution, and one closely connected with all the preceding ones, is the absence of a clear characterisation of the Cadets, the refusal to expose all their tactics, the failure to draw a distinction between the Cadets and the peasant and revolutionary democrats. Yet it is the Cadets who are masters of the situation in the present Duma. And these Cadets have already revealed more than once their betrayal of the "people's freedom". When, after the elections, the amiable windbag Vodovozov, wanting to be more Left than the Cadets, reminded the latter of the promises they had made about a constituent

assembly, and so forth, Rech, adopting a "Great Power" tone, rudely and coarsely told him that it did not need gratuitous advice.

And your resolution is equally mistaken as regards the striving to weaken the revolution. As I have already said, this striving exists not only in the government, but also in those petty-bourgeois compromisers who are now making the most noise on the surface of our political life.

Your resolution says that the Duma is trying to lean on the people. This is only half true, and therefore not true at all. What is the State Duma? Is it tolerable that we should confine ourselves to general references to this institution, instead of analysing the classes and parties that actually determine its content and significance? Which Duma is striving to lean on the people? Not the Octobrist Duma, be cause such a striving is totally alien to the Octobrists. And not the peasant Duma, for the peasant deputies are an inseparable part of the people, and there is no need for them to "strive to lean on the people". The striving to lean on the people is characteristic precisely of the Cadet Duma. But characteristic of the Cadets is both their striving to lean on the people and their tear of independent revolutionary activity by the people. By pointing to one aspect of the question and saying nothing at all about the second, your resolution presents not only a wrong, but a positively harmful picture. Objectively, silence on this second aspect—which is emphasised in our resolution on the attitude to be adopted towards other parties—is the utterance of a lie.

In defining our tactics towards the bourgeois democrats, we cannot possibly remain silent about the Cadets, or refrain from criticising them sharply. We can, and must, seek the support

only of the peasant and revolutionary democrats, and not of those who try to blunt the political contradictions of the present time.

Lastly, let us glance at the proposal to form a parliamentary group. Even the Mensheviks dare not deny that Social-Democrats must handle this new weapon, "parliamentarism", very cautiously. They are quite ready to admit this "in principle". But the point now is not admitting things in principle; the point is to make a correct appraisal of concrete conditions. Recognition of caution "in principle" is worth less if actual conditions transform this recognition into innocent and idle dreams. The comrades from the Caucasus, for example, talk very finely about independent elections, about purely Party candidates and about repudiating blocs with the Cadets. But what are these fine phrases worth when—as one of the comrades from the Caucasus in formed me in conversation—in Tiflis, that Menshevik stronghold in the Caucasus, the Left Cadet Argutinsky will probably be elected and, probably, not without the aid of the Social-Democrats? What good are our wishes for public and open statements before the masses if we only have—as we have now—the Partiiniye Izvestia of the Central Committee against a host of Cadet newspapers?

Note also that even the most optimistic Social-Democrats hope to get their candidates elected only through the peasant curia. Thus, they want to "start parliamentarism" in the practice of the workers' party with the petty-bourgeois, semi-Socialist-Revolutionary curia and not with the workers' curia. Just think, which has most chance of emerging out of this situation—a Social-Democratic or a non-Social-Democratic workers' policy?

V. I. Lenin

The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party

March 24-28 (April 6-10), 1906

From **The Role and Significance of a Cadet Duma**

If the political activities of these two sections of bourgeois democrats are different. Which of them is it more important for us to support at the present time? Can we, generally speaking, in the period of democratic revolution, support the former? Will it not mean betraying the latter? Or perhaps you will deny that Cadets who in politics are ready to resign themselves to a Shipov, in the agrarian question are capable of resigning themselves to a Kaufman? You see, gentlemen: abstract propositions, bald phrases about bourgeois democracy, do not carry you a single step forward.

But the Cadets are a united, strong and virile parliamentary party!

That is not true. The Cadets are neither a united, nor a strong, nor a virile, nor a parliamentary party. They are not united, for many of the people who voted for them are capable of fighting to the very end and not merely of striking a bargain. They are not united, for their social basis is inherently contradictory: it ranges from the democratic petty bourgeoisie to the counter-revolutionary landlords. They are not strong, for as a party they refuse to, and cannot, take part in the intense and open civil war that flared up in Russia at the end of 1905, and very likely will flare up again with added force in the near future. They are not a virile party, for even if their ideal is achieved, not they but the "solid" bourgeois, the Shipovs and Guchkovs, will be the

power in the society formed in conformity with this ideal. They are not a parliamentary party, for we have no parliament. We have no Constitution; we have only a constitutional autocracy, only constitutional illusions,which are particularly harmful in a period of intense civil war, and which the Cadets are spreading with particular zeal.

This brings us to the pivot of the question. The specific feature of the present state of the Russian revolution is that objective conditions are pushing into the forefront a resolute, extra-parliamentary struggle for parliamentarism; and for that reason, there can be nothing more harmful and dangerous at such a time than constitutional illusions and playing at parliamentarism. At such a time the parties of "parliamentary" opposition may be more dangerous and harmful than completely and avowedly reactionary parties: this proposition may sound paradoxical only to those who are totally incapable of thinking dialectically. Indeed, if the demand for parliamentarism has fully matured among the widest masses of the people, if it is based on the whole of the age-long social and economic evolution of the country, and if political evolution has brought us to the point of achieving it, what can be more dangerous and harmful than a fictitious realisation of this demand? Avowed anti-parliamentarism is harmless. Its doom is sealed. It is dead. The attempts to resurrect it are only having the very good effect of revolutionising the more backward strata of the population. A "constitutional autocracy", the creation and spreading of constitutional illusions, are becoming the only possible means of saving the autocracy. This is the only correct and wise policy the autocracy can pursue.

And I assert that at the present time the Cadets are doing more to help the autocracy to pursue this wise policy than Moskovskiye Vedomosti. Take, for example, the controversy between the latter and the liberal press as to whether Russia is a constitutional monarchy: It is not, says Moskovskiye Vedomosti. It is, say the Cadet newspapers in unison. In this controversy, Moskovskiye Vedomosti is progressive and the Cadet newspapers are reactionary; for Moskovskiye Vedomosti is telling the truth, exposing illusions, aussprechen was ist,[3] whereas the Cadets are telling a lie—a well-meaning, benevolent, sincerely-conscientious, beautiful, graceful, scientifically-smooth, Kiesewetter-varnished, drawing-room polite lie: but a lie nevertheless. And there is nothing more dangerous, nothing more harmful, in the present period of the struggle—considering the present objective conditions—than such a lie.

A slight digression. Recently I delivered a lecture on political topics at the house of a very enlightened and extremely amiable Cadet. We had a discussion. Our host said: Imagine there is a wild beast before us, a lion; and we two are slaves who have been thrown to this lion. Would it be appropriate if we started an argument? Is it not our duty to unite to fight this common enemy, to "isolate reaction", as that most wise and most far-sighted of Social-Democrats, G. V. Plekhanov, so excellently puts it? The analogy is a good one, and I accept it, I replied. But what if one of the slaves advises securing weapons and attacking the lion, while the other, in the very midst of the struggle, notices a tab reading "Constitution" suspended from the lion's neck, and starts shouting: "I am opposed to violence, both from the Right and from the Left"; "I am a member of a parliamentary party and stand for constitutional methods."

Under those circumstances would not the lion's cub who blurted out the lion's real intentions, be doing more to educate the masses and to develop their political and class consciousness, than the slave being mauled by the lion who was preaching faith in tabs?

The whole point is that, in using the stock argument that Social-Democrats must support the bourgeois democrats, people too often allow general abstract propositions to obscure the concrete situation, in which a resolute struggle for parliamentarism is maturing and in which the autocratic government is playing at parliamentarism as one of the means of combating parliamentarism. In such circumstances, when the final battle outside parliament still lies ahead, to advocate that the workers' party should support the party of parliamentary compromisers, the party of constitutional illusions, would be a really fatal mistake, if not a crime against the proletariat.

Let us imagine that we have in Russia a firmly established parliamentary system. This would mean that parliament had already become the main form of the domination of the ruling classes and forces, that it had become the principal arena of the conflict of social and political interests. There would be no revolutionary movement in the direct sense of the term; the economic and other conditions would not be engendering revolutionary outbreaks in the period we are assuming. No declamations, however revolutionary, could of course "call forth" revolution in such circumstances. It would be utterly wrong for Social-Democrats in such conditions to renounce the parliamentary struggle. It would be the duty of the workers' party to take up parliamentarism most seriously; to take part in

"Duma" elections and in the "Duma" itself; and to adjust all its tactics to the conditions favourable for the formation and successful functioning of a parliamentary Social-Democratic Party. In those circumstances, it would be our bounden duty to support the Cadet Party in parliament against all parties to the right of it. Then, too, it would be wrong categorically to object to election agreements with this party in joint elections, say, in gubernia election meetings (if the elections were indirect). More than that. It would be the duty of the Social-Democrats in parliament to support even the Shipovites against the real, brazen reactionaries. We would then say: reaction is trying to isolate us; we must try to isolate reaction.

Today, however, there is nothing like an established, universally-recognised and really parliamentary regime in Russia. The main form of domination of the ruling classes and social forces in Russia today is an avowedly non-parliamentary form; parliament is admittedly not the principal arena of the conflict of social and political interests. In these circumstances, it would be suicidal for the workers' party to support the party of parliamentary compromisers. On the other hand, support for the bourgeois democrats who are operating in a non-parliamentary manner, even if spontaneously, sporadically and unconsciously (like the peasant outbreaks) comes to the forefront, becomes a real, serious business, to which all else must be subordinated. In such social and political conditions, insurrection is a reality, while parliamentarism is a plaything, an unimportant field of struggle, a bait rather than a real concession. Hence the point is not that we repudiate or underrate the importance of parliamentarism; and general phrases about parliamentarism do not affect our position at all. The point is that in the particular conditions precisely of the

present stage of the democratic revolution the bourgeois compromisers, the liberal monarchists, while not denying that Durnovo may simply send the Duma packing, or that the law may finally reduce this Duma to a cipher, nevertheless declare that parliamentarism is a serious affair and that insurrection is utopia, anarchism, rebelliousness, impotent revolutionism, or whatever else the Kiesewetters, Milyukovs, Struves, Izgoyevs and other heroes of philistinism may call it.

Let us imagine that the Social-Democratic Party had taken part in the Duma elections, and that a number of Social- Democratic electors had been elected. Having plunged into this stupid election farce, we would have had to support the Cadets to prevent the Black Hundreds from winning. The Social-Democratic Party would have had to conclude an election agreement with the Cadets. With the aid of the latter, a certain number of Social-Democrats would have been elected to the Duma. We ask, would the game have been worth the candle? Would we have gained or lost by this? In the first place, we would not have been able to inform the masses about the terms and the character of our election agreements with the Cadets from the Social-Democratic point of view. The Cadet newspapers, in hundreds of thousands and millions of copies, would have spread bourgeois lies and bourgeois distortions of the class aims of the proletariat far and wide. Our leaflets and our little reservations in individual declarations would have been but a drop in the bucket. In practice, we would have turned out to be a dumb appendage of the Cadets. Secondly, by entering into an agreement we would undoubtedly, tacitly or openly and formally— it makes no difference—have undertaken before the proletariat a certain amount of responsibility for the Cadets; we would have vouched for them

being better than all the others; we would have guaranteed that their Cadet Duma would help the people; we would have been responsible for the whole of their Cadet policy. Whether we would have been able to disclaim responsibility for any particular steps taken by the Cadets, by means of subsequent "declarations", is an open question; and besides, the declarations would have remained mere declarations, whereas the election agreement would have remained a fact. But have we any grounds whatever for even indirectly vouching for the Cadets before the proletariat and the masses of the peasantry? Have not the Cadets given us thousands of proofs of their affinity with those German Cadet professors, with those "Frankfurt phrase-mongers", who managed to convert, not merely a Duma, but a National Constituent Assembly from an instrument for the development of the revolution into an instrument for toning down the revolution, for throttling (morally) the revolution? It would have been a mistake for the Social-Democrats to support the Cadet Party, and our Party has done the right thing in boycotting the Duma elections.

Even now it cannot be the task of the Social-Democrats to support the Cadet Party. We cannot support a Cadet Duma. In war, compromisers and deserters may be even more dangerous than the enemy. Shipov, at any rate, does not call himself a "democrat", and the "muzhik" who wants "people's freedom" will not follow his lead. But if the party of "people's freedom", after concluding a pact of mutual assistance with the Social-Democrats, were to strike a bargain with the autocracy to substitute a Ministry headed by this very Shipov for a constituent assembly, or were to confine its "activities" to making high-sounding speeches and proposing grandiloquent resolutions, we would find ourselves in a most false position.

To say that the task of the workers' party at the present time is to support the Cadets would be the same as saying that the function of steam is not to drive a ship's engine, but to keep up the possibility of sounding the ship's siren. If there is steam in the boiler, it will be possible to sound the siren. If the revolution is strong, the Cadets will also be able to sound their siren. It is quite easy to imitate the sound of a siren, and in the history of the struggle for parliamentarism bourgeois betrayers of people's freedom have many times imitated the sound of the siren and bamboozled simple-hearted folk who put their trust in various "first representative assemblies".

Our task is not to support the Cadet Duma, but to use the conflicts within this Duma, or connected with it, for choosing the right moment to attack the enemy, the right moment for an insurrection against the autocracy. What we have to do is to take account of how the political crisis in the Duma and around it is growing. As a means of testing public opinion and defining as correctly and precisely as possible the moment when "boiling point" is reached, this Duma campaign ought to be of enormous value to us, but only as a symptom, not as the real field of struggle. It is not the Cadet Duma that we shall support; it is not with the Cadet Party that we must reckon, but with those elements of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and particularly of the peasantry, who have voted for the Cadets, and who. will inevitably be disillusioned with them and get into a fighting mood. And the more decisive the victory of the Cadets in the Duma, the more rapidly will this take place. Our task is to use the respite that will be provided by an opposition Duma (and as the proletariat needs time to rally its forces properly, this respite will be very much to our advantage), to organise the workers, to expose constitutional illusions, and to prepare for a

military offensive. Our task is to be at our post when the Duma farce develops into a new great political crisis; and our aim then will be, not support for the Cadets (at best they will be only a weak mouthpiece of the revolutionary people), but the overthrow of the autocratic government and the transfer of power to the revolutionary people. If the proletariat and the peasantry are victorious in their insurrection, the Cadet Duma will in a trice draw up a document declaring its association with the manifesto of the revolutionary government announcing the convocation of a national constituent assembly. If the insurrection is suppressed, the victor, exhausted by the struggle, may be compelled to yield a good half of his power to the Cadet Duma, which will sit down to the feast, as it were, and adopt a resolution deploring the "folly" of armed uprising at a time when a genuine constitutional system was supposed to be so possible and so near at hand.... Find the corpses, and you will always find the worms.

Marxism differs from all primitive forms of socialism by not binding the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It recognizes the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not "concoct" them, but only generalizes, organizes, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas and to all doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the mass struggle in progress, which, as the movement develops, as the class-consciousness of the masses grows, as economic and political crises become acute, continually gives rise to new and more varied methods of defense and attack.. Marxism, therefore, positively does not reject any form of struggle. Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle possible and in existence at the given moment only, recognizing as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, inevitably arise as the given social situation, changes.

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